

Israeli crossing point under attack

TYRE, Lebanon (R) — Guerrillas attacked a crossing point into Israel's South Lebanon "security zone" with anti-tank rockets Monday, security sources said. A guerrilla group said its fighters hit a car carrying Israeli intelligence officers with anti-tank rockets and machinegun fire at the Beit Yehoua crossing into the zone. In a telephone call to an international news organisation in Beirut, a spokesman for the Fair Play Resistance said all officers in the car were killed or wounded in the attack. "Someone hit something with some rocket-propelled grenades at Beit Yehoua," said a security source. "But it is tough to see what happened until all the retaliatory firing comes to a stop." He said Israeli troops and their Lebanese militia allies in the South Lebanon Army (SLA) responded to the attack by strafing areas north of the "security zone" with tank cannon and mortar bombs. Security sources said guerrillas fired four rockets at the "security zone" late Sunday and Israeli artillery retaliated by shelling the village of Braachit. There were no reports of casualties in that attack.

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new envoys resent credentials

AMMAN (Petra) — Six new ambassadors Monday presented their credentials to His Majesty King Hussein in separate ceremonies held at the Royal Court. The new ambassadors were Ali Al-Sayid of Sudan, Yuji Ikeda of Japan, Fernando Silva Alves of Spain, Gny Westerouwer van Setten of the Netherlands, Mario Alberto de Bolivia and Abdul Rahman Shoudri of Bangladesh. The ceremonies were presided over by Royal Court Chief of Protocol Al Karaki and Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber.

Saudi prince arrives in Cairo for talks

CAIRO (R) — Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz arrived in Cairo Monday for talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Middle East issues, officials said. Prince Abdullah came from Syria where he discussed with President Hafez Al Assad the flagging Arab-Israeli peace process. The prince is the kingdom's first deputy prime minister.

U.S. congressman visits Beirut

EIRUT (AP) — U.S. Representative Christopher Cox arrived Monday on a fact-finding mission that local radio stations interpreted as breaking the American law ban on travel to Lebanon. But the California Republican disputed the radio's belief, saying his trip was not intended to violate any U.S. government policies. "I am here with my Californian friends to meet Lebanese officials of the government. I will learn and listen and understand the new Lebanon and forward report to Congress," Cox told the Associated Press. Mr. Cox, 40, said he would stay in Beirut for three days and hold meetings with President Elias Hrawi and Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. "I am here on behalf of myself and the over 20 million I represent. I will conduct a number of visits and will brief you on the outcome," Mr. Cox said.

Walsh: Bush misused power

WASHINGTON (R) — Iranian special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh accused former President George Bush Monday of misusing his power by pardoning his defence secretary Caspar Weinberger even before he stood on criminal charges. "President Bush's pardon of Weinberger is a disturbing fact about the abuse of power and the erosion of the rule of law," Walsh said in an interim report on his office of independence. Walsh said he had interviewed Mr. Bush and other Iranian officials. Mr. Bush pardoned Mr. Weinberger and other Iranian officials on Dec. 24, less than two weeks before Mr. Weinberger was to stand trial on criminal charges of lying in testimony to congressional and criminal investigations.

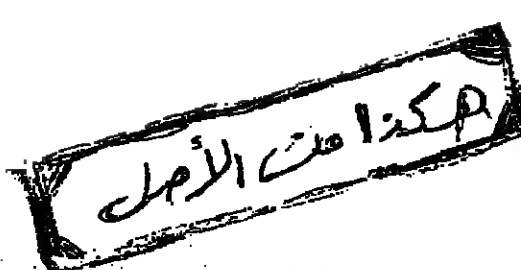
Walsh floods strike den; 20 missing

NAA (AP) — About 20 people were missing in the floods in southern Yemen. The port city of Aden, security officials said Monday. Scores of houses were swept away and hundreds left homeless by flooding that began Sunday night. Highways between Aden and the capital, Sanaa, have been blocked and communication links severed, making it difficult to obtain detailed reports. Air and sea ports were closed and Aden's broadcasting stations were off the air. A major operation was under way in Aden to which the homeless had been moved.

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Jordan Times

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جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرلي.

No breakthrough seen in Yemen-Saudi talks

NICOSIA (IAP) — A recent exchange of messages between leaders of Saudi Arabia and Yemen could pave the way for better ties, but no immediate breakthrough in solving their border dispute is expected, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said Monday. The weekly oil and economic newsletter, published in Nicosia, said it had learned that despite prospects for improved relations, the border talks were likely to remain bogged down in technical details. The economic survey did not disclose its sources, but it is known to have good contacts throughout the oil and industrial sectors in the region. The border dispute, which concerns an oil-rich strip, has alarmed foreign oil companies that operate in the area. Abdel Aziz Al Dali, the Yemeni minister of state for cabinet affairs, carried a message from President Ali Abdullah Saleh to King Fahd at the end of last month. Shortly after, Saudi Minister of Education Abdul Aziz Al Khawateer visited the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, with a message for Mr. Saleh from King Fahd. Both sides expressed interest in improving relations, which have been stormy since the Gulf crisis.

Israelis kill 3 Palestinians — 10th in 4 days of violence

NABLUS, Occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli troops shot and killed three Palestinian youths in the West Bank Monday in surging violence that has left 10 Palestinians dead in the occupied territories since Friday.

Troops killed one teenager Sunday night in the village of Toubas during a demonstration in support of Gaza residents, and shot dead two Monday in the nearby village of Tamoun during protests against the arrest of a Palestinian.

Human rights activists have expressed alarm at the rising death toll — the bloodiest four days in more than two years — and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was asked about it at a meeting of his ruling Labour Party.

But, according to an official who briefed reporters on Mr. Rabin's response, the headline former general said soldiers did not have the powers they needed. "They have a feeling that they don't have all the tools," Mr.

Rabin was quoted as saying. The prime minister told his party the army had eased the rules for entering houses where it believed "wanted" men were hiding. "First we enquire, then we warn and then we shoot."

He did not say what the previous procedures were. In the 54 days since Mr. Rabin expelled hundreds of Palestinians to Lebanon, Israeli troops have killed 41 Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In the latest killings, Palestinians and the army said a 17-year-old from the West Bank village of Toubas, Mithqal Youssef Daraghme, was shot dead by soldiers Sunday night while he was trying to rally support for Arabs in the Gaza Strip.

Palestinians said the two killed in Tamoun, Imad Bank Odeh, 17, and Alaa Bani Odeh, 18, were killed in clashes that followed a raid on a house by soldiers dressed as Arabs.

The army, which confirmed the deaths, said troops captured Mohammed Odeh, 27, whom it described as a wanted member of Fatah. Palestinian sources said he was wounded in the raid.

The round of violence began last Friday when the army shot without warning at a car containing Palestinian in the Gaza Strip, killing three. In subsequent demonstrations, three more Gazans were killed by army gunfire.

A seventh Palestinian, 16-year-old Riad Abdul Nabi, died when paramilitary border police shot him through the neck during a clash Sunday in the refugee camp of Shu'fat in Arab East Jerusalem.

The Israeli human rights group B'tselem produced a report on Sunday showing a sharp rise in deaths — especially of Palestinians under the age of 16 — after Mr. Rabin took over last July from the right-wing government of Yitzhak Shamir.

Since the Palestinian revolt against occupation began in December 1987, at least 1,013 Palestinians have been killed by Israelis.

"After five years of intifada, the security forces have much experience in dealing with stone-throwing and demonstrations and have at their disposal effective, non-lethal means to deal with these situations," B'tselem said.

"B'tselem maintains that the security forces must limit themselves to these measures during situations in which human lives are not in danger."

The Israeli army meanwhile released two Reuters journalists detained while covering the violence in the Gaza Strip.

Reporter Taher Shriteh and cameraman Marwan Al Ghoh, both Palestinians, were arrested Sunday and their film and equipment were confiscated. They were not charged. They were released on bail of 500 shekels (\$200).

(Continued on page 5)

King urges youth to contribute to democracy-building process

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday urged the Jordanian youth to contribute to the development of the country and interact with the Kingdom's democratic experiment.

"The Jordanian youth's contribution to the process of democracy and the enhancing of this process for the future is a national necessity because the youth constitute the main element in development and the building of the modern Jordan," King Hussein said at a meeting with a delegation representing the youth in the northern badia regions of Jordan.

The King called on the youth to assume their role in the



His Majesty King Hussein Monday meets with a delegation representing the northern Badia regions (Petra photo)

Amman centre on human rights, democracy takes shape

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday launched the formation of a committee to establish a study centre on human rights abuse, freedom and democracy.

The centre will be the first of its kind on Arab soil.

The 20-member committee is to comprise ministers and ex-ministers, parliament members, chairmen of professional associations and members of the international human rights organisation, Amnesty International.

In a directive issued to the government, King Hussein asked that a constituent assembly be set up to pave the way for the establishment of the Amman-based centre for the study of freedom, democracy and human rights in the Arab World.

According to a Royal decree, the assembly comprises prominent Jordanian notables who in-

clude former ministers, lawyers, journalists and other intellectuals.

In a nation-wide address on Nov. 6, King Hussein called for freedom and democracy to spread in the Arab World, noting that Jordan served as a model for the other Arab countries.

"Let them (the Arabs) come to our universities, our institutions, our schools and our newspapers. Let them support the proud national voice for the sake of the entire nation and not for our sake. Let there be established in Amman a centre for the study of freedom, democracy and human rights in the Arab World, for the light of righteousness must wipe out the dark of wrongfulness....", the King said.

The following are members of the constituent assembly, chaired by Najib Al Rashdan, a noted Jordanian lawyer and former

minister of justice: Salem Masaadeh, Taher Hikmat, Laila Sharaf, Ibrahim Izzeddin, Majed Khalifa, Salim Al Zoubi, Mohammad Faris Tarawneh, Mamoud Abbadi, Mahmoud Al Samra, Hosni Ayesb, Adnan Al Bakht, the presidents of the Jordan Bar Association and the Jordanian Press Association, Abdul Rahim Omar, Samir Habashneh, Asma Khader, Muna Shugair, Hani Dahleh and Youssef Ghawamneh.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker had sent the King the list. The prime minister said that freedom and democracy were lacking in many parts of the world while the Arab states continue to be infested with divisions and differences.

"Had the message of freedom and democracy been respected in

(Continued on page 5)

No peace talks without return of all expellees, PLO aide says

Combined agency dispatches

ARAB-ISRAELI peace talks will resume only after Israel commits itself to bring home hundreds of expelled Palestinians and pledges not to use expulsions as punishment again, a senior adviser to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said Monday.

Nabil Shaath, a senior political aide to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chairman, urged the new U.S. administration to pressure Israel into returning the expellees from Lebanon and resume Washington's dialogue with the PLO.

"The peace process cannot resume as it was without the return of the expellees," Dr. Shaath told the Associated Press. "Any illusion that there can be another solution is harmful."

He was interviewed a day after Mr. Arafat ended talks with President Hosni Mubarak and other Egyptian officials about the crisis over the evictees and the Middle East peace process.

"There must be an understand-

ing that there will be no more expulsions. We want a clear understanding to ensure that Israel will not use the weapon of expulsions again" during negotiations, Dr. Shaath said.

Dr. Shaath's only hint of compromise was that the PLO could accept resuming peace talks in April if Israel commits itself to a short-term timetable for repatriating the evictees. But he said suggestions offered last week by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin were unacceptable.

"Rabin's proposal is not a solution," Dr. Shaath said. "There has to be a comprehensive solution, not a partial solution." Israel expelled the Palestinians Dec. 17 in ostensible reprisal for the deaths of six Israeli soldiers. Mr. Rabin's government has refused to rescind the expulsions despite international condemnation and a U.N. Security Council resolution demanding their repatriation.

"The United States has to find a solution for this crisis or we cannot imagine continuation of

the peace process," Dr. Shaath said.

Asked if the PLO expects pressure on Israel from U.S. President Bill Clinton's administration, Dr. Shaath said: "Exactly, that is correct."

But he also urged Mr. Clinton to resume the U.S.-PLO dialogue, started in 1988 and severed in 1990 after a Palestinian attack on an Israeli beach.

"The United States does not have an excuse any more not to resume its dialogue with the PLO. It must be resumed," Dr. Shaath said. "These are all negotiating elements, but our only condition is the return of the expellees."

Dr. Shaath said U.S. intervention was needed to persuade Israel to drop its plan to divide the West Bank into areas of Palestinian, Israeli and joint control, to accept that the status of Jerusalem should be discussed and to negotiate directly with the PLO.

(Continued on page 5)

Rabinovitch sees early resumption of talks

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Israel's new ambassador to the United States said Monday that he expected Arab-Israeli peace talks to resume very soon.

Arriving to take up his post, Itamar Rabinovitch declined to predict precisely when Arab delegations might return to the negotiating table, but spoke of their "perceptible desire" to do so.

"Very soon, very soon," he told Reuters television at Washington's national airport, when asked when he expected the Arab negotiators to return.

"I don't think there's a point in setting timetables," said Mr. Rabinovitch, who has been Israel's chief delegate in peace talks with Syria.

"But I think in terms of our desire to continue and the perceptible desire that we see on the other side to continue... there is no reason that peace talks should be delayed for an undue period," he said.

Arab-Israeli peace negotiations have been suspended since mid-December, when Israel expelled more than 400 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Mr. Rabinovitch, paid tribute to what he called the Clinton administration's "good will" as another factor favouring the resumption of early peace talks.

"This new administration and our government have already worked together closely on trying to resolve some of the problems of the past few weeks," he said.

"This has created an ambience between the administration and

(Continued on page 5)

Expellees rule out evacuation of sick

MARJ AL ZOHOOR, Lebanon (R) — Palestinian expellees said Monday they would refuse to allow the evacuation of any more sick and wounded to Israel, even if they died.

The Palestinians, expelled by Israel on Dec. 17, banned any more evacuation of casualties after Israeli troops took five sick evictees from a hospital in the Jewish state's self-styled "security zone" to jail in Israel Sunday.

Israel said the five, evacuated from the camp by the Red Cross aboard helicopters in January, were on a list of 101 of the evictees Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said a week ago would be allowed to return from exile immediately.

The 396 evictees rejected the U.S.-brokered offer and Mr. Rabin's cutting the term in exile for the rest to a maximum of one year as a manoeuvre to avoid U.N. sanctions against Israel.

Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, the leader of the group, said the five sick were forced to return to Israel and were not given the choice of staying in the "security zone" or returning to the camp.

"We refuse any new Red Cross effort to move our sick to the 'security zone' after what happened to the five. Even if anyone dies we cannot allow sick or wounded to go to the zone," he told Reuters.

"Either all of us are allowed home or none of us will go."

The five were flown by helicop-

Israel does not expect any cut in American aid

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Finance Minister Abraham Shohat said after meeting the head of the U.S. Senate subcommittee in charge of foreign aid Monday that he did not expect any cut in U.S. assistance to Israel.

Mr. Shohat said he did not discuss cuts with Senator Patrick Leahy and said Israel would fight any reduction. The new Clinton administration is searching for ways to slash the U.S. budget deficit.

"I am very pleased it did not arise today in the discussion with Senator Leahy," Mr. Shohat said, adding he did not believe it would be raised during the visit.

"I think we have to make an effort if the problem arises to prevent a cut in economic and military aid," the finance minister told reporters.

Mr. Leahy, who arrived Sunday, said his visit focused on the planned use of the \$10 billion in loan guarantees that Washington gave to Israel last year.

Israel also receives \$3 billion in annual grants — \$1.8 billion in military aid and \$1.2 in economic aid. Israel is by far the largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid — receiving about a fifth of all U.S. foreign assistance.

Mr. Leahy later met Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for talks that Mr. Rabin's spokesman said covered everything from the economy to Middle East peace prospects.

Mr. Leahy has pushed for reforming the way almost \$15 billion in U.S. foreign aid is allocated. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said last month some military aid programmes could be reduced with the end of the cold war.

The loan guarantees, granted

last September after Mr. Rabin took office, had been rejected earlier by former President George Bush because Mr. Rabin's predecessor, Yitzhak Shamir, refused to halt Jewish settlement building in the occupied territories.

Mr. Bush feared the money would go to the settlements, which he regarded as an obstacle to peace talks.

Mr. Leahy was to visit the occupied Gaza Strip Tuesday. Israeli media reported that Mr. Leahy planned to discuss a possible cut in aid to Israel, but the senator said "that is not the purpose of my trip."

Mr. Leahy told Mr. Rabin that he feared the U.S.-packed Middle East peace talks would lose momentum unless they were resumed quickly, according to an Israeli spokesman.

The peace talks were to have resumed this month, but Palestinian delegates have refused to return to negotiations until Israel agreed to take back about 400 Palestinians it expelled to Lebanon in mid-December.

Mr. Leahy, a Vermont Democrat, is the first leading American politician to visit Israel since President Clinton took office Jan. 20. Mr. Christopher is scheduled to come to the region next week to try to get the peace talks back on track.

Mr. Leahy declined to discuss his 60-minute meeting with Mr. Rabin, saying only the talks were useful.

A Rabin spokesman quoted Mr. Leahy as saying the negotiating should start again as soon as possible. "He expressed concern that if it would not resume soon that they would lose momentum," the spokesman said.

PLO, Hamas clash on expellees, peace talks

TUNIS (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and its rival Hamas clashed Monday after Hamas warned against using Palestinian evictees as a bargaining chip for Middle East peace talks.

Hamas said in a statement the Palestinians people opposed talking with Israel.

"We warn those who are running behind the solution, those within the negotiating team or the dominant leadership in the PLO, against using the (expellees) issue as a price for the peace talks," Hamas said.

The PLO responded by saying Palestinians were united in their desire to resolve the expellees' plight and to put an end to Israeli occupation of Arab land.

"It is not true that the Palestinian people is unanimous in rejecting the peace process, it is only unanimous in its desire to remove the factors which constitute obstacles, and primarily the evictees issue," the political com-

mentator of the PLO's news agency Wafa said.

The commentary said Palestinians agreed on "the necessity for these negotiations to lead to an end to the occupation and the fact that no organisation has the right to impose opinions which do not serve their national interests."

The PLO and Hamas are rivals in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Hamas was the main target of Israel's Dec. 17 expulsion of 415 Palestinians.

The PLO and Hamas started a dialogue in Tunis in January after the expulsions, but a planned meeting between Hamas and the PLO's mainstream Fatah movement in Sudan last month did not take place. Hamas said Fatah's representative did not show up.

Hamas urged Fatah leaders "to reinforce cooperation and coordination with Hamas... we call

(Continued on page 5)

Hekmatyar shelling kills scores in Afghan capital

KABUL (R) — Hundreds of rockets and shells rained down on Kabul Monday, killing and injuring dozens of residents, as Afghan rebels launched their heaviest bombardment of the capital in three weeks of fighting.

On the 21st successive day of fighting between the army and renegade guerrillas, rockets crashed at one-minute intervals around the presidential palace, the Defence Ministry, in central residential areas and even in hospital compounds.

One rocket ploughed into a crowd at a crossroads near the luxury Soviet-built Mirorayon housing complex, killing and injuring several people, hospital doctors said.

Residents pointed to a gaping hole in a fourth floor flat in which a 10-year-old girl was killed and six people injured and to a crater in a nearby wall made by a rocket that killed one man and injured 10 people.

Four rockets ploughed into a

residential area near the Jamhuriat Hospital, killing 10 people and seriously injuring 20, hospital doctors said.

"We have had to stop operations on the fourth floor because of the danger of rockets," Dr. Marc Biot of the Belgian-based Medecins Sans Frontieres said. The hospital admitted another 50 injured and 12 dead from other parts of the city, he said.

A rocket exploded in the compound of a former Red Cross hospital, wounding four people.

Doctors said 20 dead were brought to the central Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital in the morning, as well as 60 injured.

"This is the highest number since the fighting began," said Dr. Mohammad Qassem. Most had shrapnel wounds.

The hospital, helped by the International Committee of the Red Cross, was full and many patients lay on mattresses in corridors.

(Continued on page 5)

Incumbent wins Cyprus poll but losers hold balance

NICOSIA (Agencies) — President George Vassiliou, pledging to push a U.N. plan to reunite Cyprus, surprised even his own supporters with an easy win in the first round of elections on the island, analysts said Monday.

But losing parties who favour a tougher line to end the Turkish occupation of the north could still tip the balance in next Sunday's run-off and analysts were reluctant to predict certain victory for the communist-backed millionaire.

Mr. Vassiliou, an independent, won 44.15 per cent of the vote in Sunday's polling, held only in the internationally-recognised southern two-thirds of Cyprus.

That was well above predictions but below the more than 50 per cent he needed to avoid a second round.

Jubilant Vassiliou supporters said the run-off with Glafcos Clerides, a 73-year-old conservative who won 36.74 per cent of the vote, would be a mere formality.

"The gap is too large to bridge. If I were Clerides I would withdraw from the race," Mr. Vassiliou told his supporters as soon as the final results were announced.

Businessman Paschalis Paschalides, backed by the Salvation

Front alliance, came in third with 18.64 per cent of the vote but holds the balance of power.

"We will have to wait and see what deals are struck this week," one analyst said. "There's going to be a lot of hard bargaining."

Mr. Clerides, who heads the island's largest party, the Democratic Rally, said Mr. Paschalides' supporters would lift him to victory.

The election was dominated by debate on how to reunite Cyprus, divided by the "green line" since invading Turkish troops seized the northern third in 1974. About 2,000 U.N. peacekeeping troops keep the two sides apart.

Mr. Vassiliou, a self-made millionaire, came under fire during the campaign for backing a U.N. plan to end the division.

The plan, based on a set of ideas prepared by U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali and endorsed by the Security Council, proposes making Cyprus a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation.

Talks between Mr. Vassiliou and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş, who heads the breakaway state in the north recognised only by Ankara, reached a deadlock in November. A new round of talks is scheduled for March.

Mr. Vassiliou says he has pulled the Cyprus issue out of international obscurity, put Turkey in a difficult position and brought a settlement closer than ever.

"We will go to New York in March. But if the Turkish side refuses to cooperate then the Security Council will issue a new, stronger resolution which could provide for sanctions," he said during the campaign.

Mr. Clerides, who served with the British air force during World War II, says the peace plan as it stands violates basic human rights and would exclude Cyprus from the European Community.

He says he will try to postpone the talks and reject the draft plan unless it is substantially changed.

Mr. Paschalides campaigned for the complete rejection of the peace plan. Commentators said his poor showing indicated Greek Cypriots want to give the U.N. initiative a chance.

Mr. Vassiliou told cheering supporters, "This is not a personal victory, but a victory for Cyprus. The message is that the people want to continue on a path taking advantage of the favourable international climate and increased pressure on Turkey for reaching a just settlement."

Mr. Clerides also appeared confident of victory. "This is not the final result, wait till next Sunday," he said.



George Vassiliou

confident of victory. "This is not the final result, wait till next Sunday," he said.

Mr. Vassiliou is seeking a second five-year term as an independent backed by the Communist Party.

Mr. Clerides, making his third run at the presidency, is backed by his right-wing Democratic Rally Party.

Mr. Paschalides, now out of the race, was backed by the centrist Democratic Party and the Socialists. He also had the blessing of the powerful prime of Cyprus' Greek Orthodox Church, Archbishop Chrysostomos.

Rafsanjani appears set for reelection

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's wily President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani appears to be riding out serious domestic problems and is virtually certain of reelection for a second four-year term in June, Iranian and diplomatic political analysts said.

"He looks home and dry, barring something like an assassination," said a senior Western diplomat.

The analysts dismissed persistent Tehran rumours of a rift between Mr. Rafsanjani and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader, that may undermine the president's reelection chances.

"They are the two pillars of a pragmatic regime that has been trying to liberalise the Islamic revolution and steer it cautiously away from the radicalism typical of the early stages of all revolutions," another diplomat said.

Mr. Rafsanjani's announcement on Jan. 31 that he was ready to stand for a second term came as no surprise to Iran watchers.

"It confirms what we have known all along...that he will stand once it is certain of success," the diplomat added.

Mr. Rafsanjani, among the closest advisers of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, has slowly but surely introduced reforms to liberalise the economy while steering the revolution towards a less radical Islam.

Ayatollah Khomeini's memory, as the father of Iran's Islamic revolution, remains sacrosanct. Both Mr. Rafsanjani's supporters and their radical opponents claim they are his true heirs.

Iranian analysts said Mr. Rafsanjani was the most popular of Iran's ruling mullahs. Many of those who opposed the clerical regime would vote for him as the most acceptable alternative to radical hardliners bent on keeping Iran isolated.

On the economic front, Mr. Rafsanjani has got rid of those whom he called last week "pseudo Marxists...who think everything must be in the hands of the government."

He has pushed through parliament a major currency reform that for most purposes rids the country of a cumbersome multi-layered system based on an official rate that pegged the Iranian rial to its dollar value almost 40 years ago.

The analysts said that the best



Hashemi Rafsanjani

proof of Mr. Rafsanjani's hold on power was his government's ability to push the 1993/94 budget through parliament despite stiff opposition from radicals.

Radicals said it would effectively devalue the rial for most purposes more than 20-fold, badly hitting the poorest Iranians who were the cannon fodder of the revolution and the 1980-88 war with Iraq.

By maintaining \$3.8 billion of subsidies for essential foods and other commodities, Mr. Rafsanjani was able to say that he was looking after the interests of the deprived.

He received full backing from Ayatollah Khomeini and the country's Council of Guardians, theologians who act as trustees of Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic legacy.

Mr. Rafsanjani, who comes from a wealthy farming family said to be among Iran's biggest pistachio nuts producers, is a cautious conservative free marketer who has often been seen as failing to deliver on his promises of reform.

The diplomats and analysts said expectations of a "Tehran spring" after last year's general elections when his supporters won a majority in parliament were unrealistic.

"He is still consolidating...and has eroded the powers of the radicals but they remain an important power in the country," said one diplomat referring to continued support for radical ideas among those who led the revolution 14 years ago.

He said some radicals remained in government, although not in sensitive economic positions, and Mr. Rafsanjani was widely expected to purge them after the elections.

But the analysts said the outside world should not pitch its expectations too high.

"The revolution is not over," one said, adding that Mr. Rafsanjani had to balance a lot of conflicting tensions and priorities in his administration.

Russian envoy to tell Iraq to abide by U.N. sanctions

MOSCOW (AP) — A Russian diplomat flew to Iraq Monday to encourage Baghdad to abide by U.N. sanctions, a Foreign Ministry official said.

Igor Melekhov, deputy chief of the ministry's Middle East desk, intended to clarify Iraq's recent statements on sanctions and its opinion of the new U.S. president, said Mideast desk chief Vladimir Nosenko, according to the Interfax news agency. It was unknown whether he would meet President Saddam Hussein.

"We are going to insist that Iraq fulfill all the applicable resolutions of the U.N. Security Council," Mr. Nosenko told Interfax. "That is the main goal of the visit."

Mr. Nosenko emphasised there was no plan to change Russia's position on the sanctions. He said the visit would last two or three days and that the diplomat also would discuss Iraq's debt to the former Soviet Union.

Word of the visit over the weekend and fuelled Iraqi hopes of improved relations with its former superpower ally in Moscow.

While Iraq has made no official comment on the visit, Iraqi officials privately welcomed the visit and said it would cover a wide range of issues, including ways to resume trade if U.N.-imposed sanctions are lifted.

Iraq and Russian hardliners are eager to rebuild the ties, Russia recently has appeared to be softening its line towards Iraq and has asked for more control over U.S.-led attacks.

The Soviet supported the U.N.-backed war to oust Baghdad from Kuwait during the seven-month Gulf crisis two years ago.

Russian members of parliament, especially opponents of President Boris Yeltsin, have recently visited Baghdad. But Mr. Melekhov's visit will be the first official trip by a government member, embassy officials said.

Russia called last month for a U.N. review of the air strikes on Baghdad after American cruise missiles destroyed a factory near the capital and hit a downtown hotel. Several people were reported killed.

A Russian veto only could be employed if the another Security Council member, presumably the United States, sought approval of military action against Iraq.

Iraqi pardon for jailed foreigners rumoured

BAGHDAD (R) — A political deal to free two Britons jailed in Iraq is unlikely but a pardon by President Saddam Hussein as a gesture to visiting relatives could not be ruled out, diplomats said Monday.

There is a rumour sweeping the prison that the president will free everyone convicted of illegally entering Iraq, a European diplomat told Reuters.

The families of Paul Ride and Michael Wainwright, accompanied by a senior British Red Cross official, were due to arrive in Baghdad from Jordan later Monday to visit the men and appeal for their freedom.

Mr. Ride is serving a seven-year sentence for illegal entry after straying over the border from Kuwait in June. Mr. Wainwright, who cycled in from Turkey in May, is serving 10 years.

Iraq has rejected court appeals against the convictions.

Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz last week again linked freedom for the two men to the unfreezing of some of the hundreds of millions of dollars of Iraqi assets held in Britain since the Gulf crisis.

Diplomats said it was unlikely Britain would cut such a deal. But they did add the out a surprise pardon by President Saddam as a "grand gesture."

He cautioned that prison rumours were often baseless. But the president could declare either a wide amnesty or a specific gesture of compassion to the Britons' relatives, they said.

The delegation, which includes Mr. Ride's two-year-old son, is the highest-profile visit to the two Britons since they were jailed.

Mr. Ride and Mr. Wainwright along with three Swedes, a Filipino and a Bangladeshi imprisoned for the same offence are held at a sprawling prison near Baghdad.

"The answer we get is that it is just a matter of time," said Swedish foreign ministry official Roger Garoff, who has been in Baghdad since December to discuss the Swedes' release.

"Our original mission was to bring the boys home if not for Christmas at least for New Year but it hasn't happened yet."

The three, Stefan Wihlborg, Leif Westberg and Crister Stromgren, were jailed for seven years last September for entering illegally from Kuwait.

Mr. Garoff and Russian envoys looking after British interests in Iraq said all five men were being treated well and mingled with each other. They were held in a foreigners compound.

Sweden in December sent 63 tonnes of medicine to Iraq in a gesture which diplomats said helped prompt the expected release.

"There is a humanitarian connection," Mr. Garoff said.

Other diplomats noted however that the jailed Britons were a better bargaining chip for Baghdad, which wants to repair ties with Washington, London and other members of the anti-Iraq Gulf war coalition.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

'Iran will work for Afghan peace'

QUETTA, Pakistan (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said Sunday Tehran would work for peace in Afghanistan and welcomed an initiative by Saudi Arabia to halt the fighting. Mr. Velayati told reporters he and the Afghan and Pakistani foreign ministers had discussed ways of ending factional fighting in the Afghan capital Kabul that had killed hundreds of people in the past three weeks. "It is our preliminary decision to work on the trilateral meeting once again between Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan," he said. "Also, if the Saudis can help peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan, it would be welcomed." Mr. Velayati was in the southwestern Pakistani town of Quetta for a ministerial meeting of the 10-nation Economic Cooperation Organisation to which Afghanistan and Pakistan belong. King Fahd last month invited warring Afghan Mujahideen groups to meet in Saudi Arabia to settle their differences.

50th U.N. team to head for Iraq

MANAMA (R) — A U.N. weapons inspection team, the 50th since the end of the Gulf war, will head for Iraq on Friday, U.N. spokesman Douglas England announced on Monday. He said the 15-member team would focus on ballistic missiles which the United Nations has banned in Iraq along with nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The team, which will be arriving in Bahrain Tuesday night, will be headed by Patricia Palanque, a Frenchman who led a similar mission 14 months ago. The visit is due to last nine to 10 days. Sweeping U.N. sanctions on Iraq cannot be lifted before international inspectors signal full Iraqi compliance on the destruction of the weapons programmes.

Ecstatic Egyptian Romeo shoots five people

CAIRO (R) — Overcome with joy after he walked out of a Cairo jeweller's shop with his fiancée, Khaled Ismail Suleiman pulled out a gun, fired into the air and wounded five passers-by, Al Ahram newspaper reported Monday. Police arrested Mr. Suleiman, a 25-year-old state employee, and charged him with illegal possession and use of firearms. He said he was ecstatic over his engagement and admitted shooting wildly. The wounded were taken to hospital.

U.S. sailor, Pakistani driver drown

ABU DHABI (R) — A sailor from the U.S. guided-missile cruiser Worden and a Pakistani taxidriver drowned when their car plunged into the sea off the United Arab Emirates, the U.S. embassy said Monday. A second American sailor swam to safety as the taxi sank off the port of Jabel Ali, Dubai, on Sunday. The embassy withheld further details.

Kurdish rebels kill six in Turkey

SIRT, Turkey (AP) — Kurdish insurgents killed six people in two separate attacks in southeastern Turkey, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported Sunday. Kurdish guerrillas raided a house Saturday, shooting dead five civilians in the town of Kurtalan, the agency said. In an attack on Sunday, the rebels shot to death a village official in the province of Batman.

UNICEF tackles measles epidemic in Somalia

MOGADISHU (R) — The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said Monday it aimed to vaccinate 750,000 children threatened by measles in ruined Somalia, where the disease is killing hundreds every week.

Last year 75,000 Somali children died from measles and 95,000 from diarrhoeal dehydration as war and famine gripped the Horn of Africa country.

"We are launching a blitz within weeks to vaccinate more than 750,000 children under the age of five because measles is still killing hundreds a week," UNICEF spokesman Ian MacLeod told Reuters.

UNICEF vaccinated 250,000 children last year. But operations by it and other aid agencies were hampered by poor security and the lack of trained local health workers in anarchic Somalia, Mr. MacLeod said.

The arrival in December of a U.S.-led multinational military force to speed up delivery of food aid to the starving had generally improved security, he said. But it also deprived agencies of their private guards.

"Previously we used to travel almost anywhere we wanted because we were protected by armed so-called technicals, but these are no longer allowed to carry guns as part of measures by the task force to clean up place of gunmen."

"As a result, our operations have been curtailed because the coalition forces cannot be everywhere all the time. In fact our vehicle was looted here in Mogadishu only last week. This would

not have happened before," he said.

UNICEF also needed transport such as helicopters to penetrate Somalia's hinterland and this could be provided only by the 23-nation force of 37,000 troops, he said.

"We have held discussions with the U.S. military on this. They seemed excited about it but have not done anything about it so far, Mr. MacLeod said.

Also hampering the vaccination programme was the lack of trained Somali health staff.

"Presently we have 22 international health workers helping with the vaccination programme but we really need lot of local staff to make the programme sustainable as the child killer diseases will continue to be problems for a long time," he said.

More than 300,000 people died of famine in Somalia in the past two years after gunmen owing allegiance to several political factions systematically looted food aid for an estimated two million people threatened with starvation.

The gunmen, who still clash almost daily with the multinational force, took over Somalia after rebels toppled long-ruling military dictator Mohammad Siad Barre in 1991.

Italian troops shot dead two Somali bandits and captured a third in Mogadishu gunbattles, a U.S. military spokesman said Monday. Master Sergeant Perry Champ said the Italians took on the bandits about to rob a group



French soldiers search for mines on a road west of Mogadishu. The French unit of the multinational force in Somalia have cleared mines on over 1,000 kilometres of roads (AFP photo)

of Somalis in the capital during the night.

"The bandits fired at the Italian patrol and began to flee. The Italians gave chase, killing two and wounding and capturing another bandit. One bandit

escaped," he told reporters.

The bandits were the latest to be killed by the U.S.-led multinational force sent to Somalia in December to speed up movement of food aid to the country's starving.

Israel: No discrimination against homosexual soldiers

TEL AVIV (AP) — Replying to charges of discrimination against homosexual soldiers, the Israeli army said Sunday that gays were treated like all other troops and were not restricted as a group.

"The Israeli Defence Forces drafts into its ranks candidates for security service who meet the requirements, including homosexuals," a military communications said, adding homosexual soldiers are allowed to serve in a wide range of units.

It said the army awarded high security clearances on an individual basis and homosexuals were not barred from sensitive

jobs as a group.

The statement came following charges the army fired or curtailed promotion for openly gay soldiers.

Last week, a professor charged the army drummed him out of a senior position in defence research after he admitted he was homosexual.

Reuven Gal, a former chief psychologist of the army, commented Sunday that there were cases where individuals would be restricted because of their sexual preference.

"Soldiers declared or found to

be homosexuals will be restricted from serving in highly sensitive units like intelligence," Mr. Gal told Israel Radio.

"Or they might be excluded from some combat units that are highly condensed or under high stress or may serve for long periods of time in seclusion, something like that," he said.

However, some openly gay soldiers have advanced in the Israeli military machine. Most notably, a former chief medical officer was promoted to the position after he came out of the closet.

Israel's parliament decriminalised sodomy two years ago and is

considering a bill that would end discrimination against gays in the workplace.

"Israel is one of the most progressive countries in the world on this matter," said Energy Minister Amnon Rubinstein, an advocate for human rights.

But Mr. Rubinstein also claimed discrimination existed in the military and called on the army to equate itself with the laws passed by parliament.

"Israel has made great strides in the past years...but this is not enough," Mr. Rubinstein told Israel Radio.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel. 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:30	Michael Vailanti
18:30	La Famille Kamdan
19:00	News in French
19:15	Reportage
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Perfect Strangers
21:10	The Dr. Watson Dynasty
22:00	News in English
22:30	Big Man
PRAYER TIMES	
05:02	Fajr
10:21	(Sunrise) Duha
11:59	Dhuhr
14:52	Asr
17:19	Maghrib
18:37	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swaleh, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637441	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrence Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851. Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 715261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717151	
Armenian International Church Tel. 642398	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623024, 654932	
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691	
Church of the Redeemer Tel. 636326	
WEATHER	
Bulfinch supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be cold, cloudy and rainy, with snow falling on hilly areas 900 metres above sea level. Winds will be southerly fresh to gusty. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy and rainy at times, while winds will be southerly fresh and seas rough.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	1 / 18
Aqaba	8 / 18

JORDAN TIMES DAILY

Deserts	-1 / 8
Jordan Valley	4 / 15

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 11, Aqaba 21. Humidity readings: Amman 79 per cent, Aqaba 45 per cent.

Aqaba pharmacy	(-)
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ZARQA:

Dr. Yahya Al Tarifi	981502
Khalifeh pharmacy	985417

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Walod Kisiwani	621441
Dr. Abbas Al Hakem	805446
Dr. Ghazi Abu Sheikha	752405
Dr. Adnan Al Zughout	898140
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asama pharmacy	637035
Nairokh pharmacy	625672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shimiani pharmacy	637660
Nairokh pharmacy	625672
Najib pharmacy	947632

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	631341
Civil Defence Emergency	699
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891226
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630331
Hotel Complaints	615800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	397467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	
Telephone Information	787111
(directory assistance)	121

Home News

Queen Noor checks progress of handicraft training centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday paid a follow-up visit to the Salt Handicrafts Training Centre where she met with trainees and discussed the progress of the new weaving and ceramics training and production centres and met with trainees. The Queen visited the newly established clay production workshop which has managed to produce clay locally to meet the needs of the ceramic production and handicrafts market. The work, equipped with appropriate processing technologies, will make ceramic production easier and more economical.



Her Majesty Queen Noor discusses advantages of Jordanian clay with a trainee at the Salt Handicrafts Training Centre Monday (Photo by George Crystal)

Queen Noor also called at the recently-established Pilot Units operated by female trainees of the centre and was impressed by their progress in meeting orders of weaving ceramic items. The Queen visited the silk screening and pottery workshops and the trainees' showroom, where hand-made works are displayed.

The Salt Handicrafts Training Centre was established in 1987 by the Salt Development Corporation (SDC) with funding and technical support from the Italian Government. Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) took over management and development of the centre in May 1988 after an agreement was signed with SDC. The centre's mission is closely linked to the overall NHF comprehensive and integrated approach to development, whereby traditional skills and locally available resources are utilised both to serve Jordan's national heritage and help crafts people launch income-generating schemes, leading to enhancing their living standards and helping them

achieve self-reliance. The centre offers a free three-year programme with a capacity to accommodate 90 students in ceramics and weaving. Sixty-one students (41 females and 20 males) currently receive training under the supervision of Jordanian instructors who had undergone special intensive training in Italy. In addition to technical skills in crafts production, students also take relevant courses in history, Arabic, English and management. The first batch of students (22) graduated in 1991 and have received assistance from the centre either in starting their craft production schemes or in joining the

Princess Sarvath inaugurates west Amman Blood Bank

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath and American Ambassador to Jordan Roger Harrison inaugurated Monday in Amman the first branch of the National Blood Bank. The branch was established at the request of six private hospitals located in west Amman. The branch is equipped to collect blood from donors and to provide blood and blood products for all planned and emergency procedures. The branch will remain open 24 hours every day and will substantially reduce the time involved in receiving blood for acute emergency cases from the National Blood Bank in Ashrafiya.



Princess Sarvath looks on as citizen donor gives blood at the west Amman Blood Bank opened Monday

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) contributed more than \$400,000 in technical assistance, medical equipment, initial supplies, and training costs for the branch. Technical assistance for the branch was provided by Blood Systems Inc. in Scottsdale, Arizona, which is affiliated to the Association of American Blood Banks.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by the Minister of Health, the director of the National Blood Bank, the USAID director in Jordan, and a large number of figures from the

medical profession. In May 1991, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan commissioned a study to explore the need and feasibility of establishing blood bank branches throughout the Kingdom. The study concluded that such establishments are vital to save the lives of citizens in need of blood in acute emergency situations. Satellite branches dispersed throughout the Kingdom will substantially reduce the time-lag experienced by Jordanian hospitals in receiving blood and blood products from the National Blood Bank in Ashrafiya. The first branch was opened in west Amman because of the presence of six large hospitals in the area, and because of the volume of acute emergency situations handled by these hospitals. It is also intended as a model to demonstrate the feasibility and usefulness of establishing similar branches throughout Jordan.

Japan reaffirms role in peace process, support for Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Japan has reaffirmed its key role in the Middle East peace process and continued engagement in efforts at various levels to advance the process, a Japanese embassy spokesman said Monday.

The spokesman was commenting on the talks a Japanese delegation held here this week with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and senior officials. The delegation, headed by Yoshiaki Nogami, Deputy Director of the Near East and Africa Desk at the Foreign Ministry, left Jordan Monday.

"The visit aimed at reviewing the peace process as well as Jordanian-Japanese relations," said the spokesman. During the talks, Mr. Nogami "reaffirmed Japan's key interest in the Middle East peace process and its continued role, along with the co-sponsors of the Arab-Israeli peace talks, in trying to achieve peace in the region," the spokesman told the Jordan Times.

The spokesman noted that Japan is a member of working groups of the multilateral phase of the peace process and heads the panel on the environment. He said Japan believed that it could play a significant role in the multilateral phase of the peace process.

"Japan takes a special interest in water-related issues and its expertise could help solve some of the water problems" facing Jordan as well as other countries

in the region, he said, referring to the vast experience and technology his country has in addressing water shortages.

The Crown Prince and the Japanese official reviewed scopes of cooperation between Japan and Jordan in enhancing the Middle East peace process, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The Crown Prince described the countries between the Mediterranean Sea and the Arab Gulf as a single regional unit, linked and affected by common economic, political, social, security and environmental concerns.

Among the officials Mr. Nogami, who last visited Jordan in March 1991, met in Amman with Planning Minister Ziad Fariz and Water and Irrigation Minister Samir Kassar.

The Japanese spokesman declined to elaborate on the talks, but said Japan had also reassured Jordan of Tokyo's continued support on various bilateral levels, including financial assistance to the Kingdom.

According to the spokesman, Japan pledged to extend aid to Jordan during the Jan. 27-28 meeting in Paris of a consultative group of donor countries.

"The details of the assistance are being worked out," the spokesman said without giving any figures.

Japan has been and remains to be one of the consistent sources of assistance for Jordan.

Attending the Japanese delegation's talks here was the new Japanese ambassador to Jordan, Yuki Ikeda.

Delegation heads for ex-Soviet republics

AMMAN (Petra) — A high-level delegation led by Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Bin Zeid left Moscow Monday at the start of a tour of the Russian Federation and the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union.

The delegation is carrying messages to the heads of state of countries expressing Jordan's eagerness to bolster cooperation in a number of fields, according to the Jordan News

Agency, Petra. The tour is a directive of His Majesty King Hussein who instructed the government to establish direct contacts with the new republics and build strong ties of friendship.

At a meeting at the Royal Court King Hussein instructed the delegation to convey to the heads of these republics Jordan's deep desire to promote its relations with their countries.

Petra said the delegation, which includes individuals from

the private and the public sectors, will discuss scopes of future cooperation between Jordan and the independent states in political, economic, social and cultural fields.

The agency quoted delegation members as saying that they will offer Jordan's expertise to these countries and open the Al al Baith University in Mafrak to their students.

Petra said Jordan will soon appoint resident and non-resident ambassadors to these countries.

PSD to begin traffic safety campaign

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Traffic Department at the Public Security Department (PSD) Thursday will begin a public awareness campaign on traffic safety that will run throughout the year, a department statement said.

Traffic Department Director Ahmad Dumour told the Jordan

News Agency, Petra, that one day a week, 30 university students will be stationed along main streets to help traffic police in controlling the flow of traffic and distributing traffic safety information leaflets.

The campaign aims to reduce the number of road accidents, said

Brigadier Dumour, adding that it will be useful to pedestrians as well as motorists.

He said motorists should ensure that their vehicles are in good working orders and strictly abide by traffic road signs and regulations to avoid accidents.

Storm to centre on south

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan is expected to experience severe weather conditions today that will bring rain and choppy seas to Aqaba.

A spokesman for the Department of Meteorology said Monday that a depression which is centred over Cyprus will affect the country Monday evening through Tuesday. Several cold fronts will bring rain to all regions and snow to areas 900 metres above sea-level.

But the spokesman said the storm will be concentrated in the southern regions of the Kingdom.

The department forecasts maximum temperatures of 7°C, dropping to 1°C at night in the eastern highlands.

Produce exporters form new society

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian agricultural produce exporters Monday announced the creation of the Jordanian Society of Exporters of Fruits and Vegetables (JSEFV).

In an address to the society's constituent assembly meeting at the Amman Chamber of Commerce, agricultural engineer Jamil Zureiqat said the JSEFV was a necessity following the difficulties encountered in exporting Jordan's produce over the past two years.

The society plans to ensure continued exports to Arab countries and open new markets in Europe, Asia and Africa, Mr. Zureiqat said.

Members of JSEFV were quoted as saying that the society will dedicate its efforts towards diversifying its produce line; conducting research aimed at improving quality; introducing measures for better packaging and shipment; and publishing daily bulletins on world market prices, specifications and standards.

They added that the society will coordinate matters regarding land, sea and air shipments and organise agricultural fairs in Jordan and abroad.

Delegates representing 38 firms and agricultural companies in Jordan attended the constituent assembly meeting to discuss bylaws and statutes.

They said their next step will be to register the society with the Ministry of Social Development in accordance with Jordanian laws.

PSD reactivates residency law, violators face fines, imprisonment

AMMAN (Petra) — Non-Jordanian citizens living in the Kingdom will face fines and even imprisonment if they fail to abide strictly by the regulations of the Residents and Aliens Affairs Law of 1974.

Public Security Department (PSD) official Adel Armouti told a press conference in Amman

Monday that the government was going to reactivate the law which had not been strictly enforced.

Brigadier Armouti, who is in charge of the PSD's Borders and Aliens Affairs Department, said the reactivation of the law, due to begin Mar. 1, was necessary to bring the status of foreign residency in the country under control.

Brig. Armouti said non-Jordanians should report to police stations to renew their residency permits at least two weeks before the expiration date, according to Article 11 of the law.

Article 12 requires foreigners to report any change of address to police stations within 48 hours of

relocating. Article 14 requires hotels, pensions and landlords to report all foreigners registering or taking up residence at their establishments to police stations within 48 hours.

Violators of the law face imprisonment of one week to one month, Brig. Armouti said.

Home News in Brief

Crown Prince condoles family in south

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday conveyed His Majesty King Hussein's condolences to the family of a woman who died tragically last week in the village of Al Marjha. A mother and six children died from carbon dioxide fumes of a home-made heater in their single room house. Prince Hassan said he planned to make a comprehensive tour of the south to listen to and discuss the needs of the residents and their councils.

Education ministry creates audit office

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thouqan Al Hindawi decided Monday to create two new departments within the Ministry of Education as part of the administrative reform plan. The two departments will be responsible for internal inspection, auditing and administrative control.

Governor shuts down factories, restaurants in Balqa

AMMAN (Petra) — Balqa Governor Faid Al Qataneh decided Monday to close two dairy product factories and two restaurants in his governorate. Mr. Qataneh, Chairman of the governorate's health safety committee, said the closure orders were issued because the establishments did not abide by health and public safety regulations. Meanwhile, the committee issued warnings to craft stores in the industrial areas of Salt for violating health regulations.

Rush to combat rabies problem

AMMAN (Petra) — Jerash district Governor Khaled Al Khreisha decided to make arrangements to combat stray dogs in the district. At a meeting Monday attended by the directors of the district's health and agriculture departments and the chief of the district Police Department, the danger of stray dogs was discussed. The district will launch a campaign to combat the spread of rabies, which was transmitted by dogs to 120 people in the district in 1992 and four people this year.

Jordan, Egypt begin power link-up

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Turkey have begun the first of two stages to link their national electric power grids, announced Mohammad Azzam of the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA).

Mr. Azzam, a JEA engineer, recently returned from Cairo where a joint technical committee met to review the finishing touches of the \$184 million project.

He said two committees charged with finalising the link-up plan will submit their findings in Amman in May to a meeting of the ministers of energy from the five countries.

The ministers took the decision to link their electricity grids in two stages at a meeting in Damascus last October.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Azzam said the ministers had decided to start the linkages with Egypt and Jordan, then follow with linking Syria and Turkey in the first stage to be completed by 1997 at an overall cost of \$84 million.

Egypt and Jordan have already begun the linking process, and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) has approved a \$140 million loan for the project.

Jordan's share towards implementing the first stage will be \$19.5 million, according to Mr. Azzam.

In the second stage, to be completed by 1999, the grid will be extended from Syria and Turkey to Iraq, he said.

Mr. Azzam the entire project will be financed through a loan provided by (AFESD).

He added that the project aims to reduce the cost of investing in expanding existing generation units in each of the participating countries; will enable these states to exchange power supply and expertise in energy production; and will make power more available.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition entitled "Modernist Still Life Photographed" at the American Centre.

Exhibition of watercolour paintings by Syrian artist Nazir Ab'a at Baladna Art Gallery.

Exhibition of paintings by the late Syrian artist Alfred Hatmal Al Balqa Art Gallery in Fuhais city.

Exhibition of paintings by four Arab artists from the United Arab Emirates — Ghada Jamal, Helen Khal, Suha Noursi and Afaf Rayk — at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery in Amman, between the First and Second Circles.

Exhibition of photographs by Jean-Philippe Reverdot at the Arab Cultural Centre.

FILM

German film entitled "Der Schaff der Vernunft" at 8 p.m. at Goethe Institute (82 min., 1983)

Petra Systems Bull Groupe

Worldwide Information Systems

Bull

At a Press Conference held in Amman Yesterday, February 8th 1993, Mr. Thierry Maupile -Managing Director of Groupe Bull- Middle East Operation and Mr. Mustafa A.Nasereddin -Managing Director of Petra Systems, Signed a Distribution Agreement under which Petra Systems was appointed as Groupe Bull Distributor in Jordan.

Groupe Bull was founded in Europe more than 50 years ago. It is today rooted in Europe and the United States and provides a wide range of information technology to the entire world with revenues of approximately \$ 6 billion in 1991, Groupe Bull invests more than 10% of its revenues in R & D.

, a model for Cus-Bull Distributed Computing Model Central to the Groupe Bull strategy is the former information systems.

The model allows customers to integrate their existing machines and networks (Bull or others) in their strategies for future Information Systems requirements.

CISC -platform range of servers, based on Bull DPX/2, a UNIX-Groupe Bull also markets the technology.

POWER product range of servers and workstations based on the UNIX is a new Bull DPX/20, which is a (BOS/X) technology. This line runs under the Bull Open System environment RISC (OSF) standard defined by the Open System Foundation

Another highlight in the Bull offering is Bull's latest Z-LINE Family from Zenith Data Systems.

printers, which range from 200 character-per-Bull Compuprint are Z-LINE Along with the second office matrix printers to 10 page-per-minute duplex laser printers.

Mathilde system (NIP) Also within the Bull offering is the high performance Non Impact Printing which includes a fully Arabized solution.

Bull holds more than 500CPS Smart Card Another variety in Groupe Bull's product range is the patents for its unique technology, and has delivered more than 60 million of the smart cards to all five continents.

linking front office oper- Bull Retail Information System Also available in the Bull offering, the solutions (the point of sale) to back office management.

In addition to this impressive array of technology, Groupe Bull is also pleased to present a range of running on a selection of Bull platforms. Arabized solutions vertical

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.
 جردان تيمز يومية عربية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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Editor-in-Chief:
 GEORGE S. HAWATMER

Editorial and advertising offices:
 Jordan Press Foundation,
 University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
 Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
 Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
 Facsimile: 661242

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House of glass and issues

THE LOWER House of Parliament appears to have become increasingly assertive in its final days of office, and it is hard to tell whether the deputies' interests in the issues they have been raising lately are for real or are intended purely for electioneering purposes, particularly when the next elections are just around the corner. Only a few weeks ago many deputies moved to curtail the government's right to appoint civil servants even though no parliament in any part of the world interferes with this prerogative except with regard to the most senior executive posts. On Sunday, there was another occasion in which a large number of deputies tried in vain to adopt a motion prohibiting the country from boycotting or imposing sanctions against another Arab state.

No doubt most of those who backed the latter move acted with best of intentions, but they were obviously not fully versed with relevant international law and diplomatic relations between countries based on international treaties. The prime movers behind the proposal, however, seemed to be trying to capitalise on public sentiment, which is still largely favourable to Iraq, and they thus attempted to draw attention to the bind in which many Arab governments have found themselves. The paradox here was the need to heed U.N. Security Council resolutions on Iraq while at the same time remain loyal and true to Arabism and its cause. What may have strengthened the stance of the supporters of this position is the fact that many countries continue to flout Security Council resolutions with impunity, making Iraq the sole U.N. member state accountable for total adherence to such decisions.

In this sense, the deputies who introduced the motion that aimed to give precedence to Arab nationalism over international resolutions that are selectively implemented, did the right thing. But to correct the imbalances and double standards in the application of international law and U.N. resolutions would require at least joint Arab action and Third World solidarity, which are not available for now. Jordan is just too vulnerable on its own to take on the task of rejecting the observance of U.N. sanctions against Iraq.

The reality of the situation must be clear to all. The Arab countries are sovereign member states of the United Nations. No amount of rhetoric, however good intentioned, can change this fact. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, it flouted not only international law but also the Arab League's Charter. The Western reaction that followed was admittedly perpetrated with the worst intentions possible, but the fact remains that Baghdad has to take responsibility for its own actions. Still, the Iraqi people have paid a heavy price, and they now need the sanctions against them lifted. The way to do that lies not in unilateral violation of the relevant Security Council resolution but by a new outlook and vision by the Arab World as a whole. There is every need on our part to bury the past and start planning for a better, brighter future.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDAN'S INTEREST in launching cooperation with the Russian Federation and the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union reflects the Kingdom's keenness on building the best possible relations and establishing the strongest ties with more than 50 million Muslims, said *Al-Dustour* Arabic daily Monday. The paper said that Jordan wants to found this relationship on the basis of affection, mutual confidence and collective action in cultural, social and political fields. King Hussein, in his address to the delegation leaving for Moscow on this noble mission reflected Jordan's feelings and orientation and pointed out that its members should attempt to create with these states the highest level of brotherly ties, the paper continued. It said that the Kingdom will offer all possible assistance to the newly independent states to help them cope with the increasing demands entailed in the recent socio-political changes witnessed in their countries. It said that the basis of all future contacts and relations with these republics is the Islamic faith which calls for solidarity among members of the Islamic Nations.

A COLUMNIST in *Al-Rai* daily welcomed the coming tour of the Middle East by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, noting that it must be aimed at stimulating the peace process. Mahmoud Rimawi said that the tour will no doubt put an end to unfounded rumours that the new U.S. administration is indifferent to the situation in the Middle East region. It is an established fact, said the writer, that unless this peace process is backed by a major power or powers, it is bound to collapse. But, he said, it should be noted here that such a process can by no means find its way towards success unless the question of the expelled Palestinians has been settled in a fair and just manner and in implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 799. The writer said that the U.S. administration ought to realise that the expelled question is not a mere humanitarian matter, but rather it reflects the deep-rooted problem of Israeli occupation of Arab land that has plagued the region for so long and obstructed all bids for genuine peace. The U.S. administration should realise that in its war against the Palestinians, Israel has been flouting all U.N. resolutions and international principles and by deporting the 415 Palestinians in southern Lebanon it showed total disregard to the Geneva Conventions, added Mr. Rimawi. He said that Israel has placed a major obstacle in the path of Mr. Christopher's mission and has poisoned the atmosphere of the peace process.

The View from Fourth Circle

Stability vs. dignity — let's talk, once again

By Rami G. Khouri

United States Secretary of State Warren Christopher's trip to the Middle East later this month has a familiar — almost a routine — ring about it, which rather lowers the excitement quotient that it might otherwise generate. Once again, we face not the promise of peace in our lifetime, but the slightly less dramatic certainty of a new U.S. Secretary of State travelling to the Middle East in a bid to promote the elusive "peace process." As Arab and Israeli politicians and national leaders both curiously review the new folks in the White House and try to establish lines of diplomatic credit, the vast majority of Arab people greet the U.S. envoy with the political equivalent of a collective yawn.

The reason, of course, is that we have been through this routine so many times in modern history that it no longer seems as important or as promising as it once was. The immediate crisis over the fate of the 400 expelled Palestinians dramatically highlights the underlying forces that give rise to widespread Arab doubt about the value of visiting U.S. secretaries of state. Courtesy and rationality dictate that we greet the visitor with decorum and civility, but gut political instinct and the compelling lessons of recent experience suggest to us that what we may be seeing is closer to the realm of tourism than history.

The Christopher visit quickly discards the prevalent view around this region that the new Clinton administration would make the Middle East a low priority. The symbolism of Mr. Christopher's first foreign trip to the Middle East, specifically to address the issue of Palestinian human rights and the prospects for Arab-Israeli peace-making, is a clear indicator that the problems of this region will continue to impose themselves on the mind and agenda of the world. The Clinton folks may like to downgrade the Middle East on their priorities list, but the dynamics of a region riddled with injustice and human discontent will not allow this to happen.

The controversy over Israel's treatment of the expelled Palestinians highlights a certain sense of history catching up with diplomacy, of old Israeli sins and American acquiescence finally generating a level of indignity in the Arab World that has started to impact on an otherwise rational quest for peace and justice. This has happened because the symbolism of the expelled is more than just symbolism — it touches the very core of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the 20th century Arab dilemmas. In physically throwing out hundreds of Palestinians from their home and land in blatant defiance of clear international legal conventions, the issue embodies the most fundamental dynamics of the predatory, colonial, and racist Zionism that has plagued the Arabs, particularly the Palestinians, for nearly a century; it simultaneously reflects the parallel international, particularly American, attitude that appears to give Israelis more rights and respect than it gives to the Arabs.

Into the middle of this emotional and political maelstrom rides a new U.S. secretary of state, making peculiar statements to the

effect that since Israel has allowed 100 of the expelled Palestinians to return home, the Arabs should sit back and enjoy the show. Unfortunately, he seems to miss the point of what is happening in the Arab world and the broader Islamic and third worlds. Perhaps he will learn some of this when he visits the region. Let us hope he has the capacity to seek out the truth of the reality that defines the lives of several hundred million Arabs. His personal credentials and experience, coupled with the egalitarian political impulses of the Clinton crowd, are good omens for dialogue and genuine understanding.

The truth Mr. Christopher should seek out appears relatively simple: Most of the Arab/Muslim people of this region are disappointed and fed up with fact-finding missions, get-to-know-you missions, confidence-building missions, exploratory missions, mediating missions, crisis management missions, keep-the-peace missions, visit-the-troops missions, show-the-flag missions, pancake-making missions, tourism missions, sunbathing missions, weapons-selling missions, and falafel-eating missions by distinguished officials from the West. Our sense of Arab hospitality and humanism tells us to remain courteous and welcoming, but our sense of history tells us to distinguish carefully between a mechanical going-through-the-motions and diplomatic substance, between the fluff of routine and the stuff of substantive fate.

It has been nearly eight decades since the MacMahon-Sheriff Hussein correspondence in the second decade of this century launched the modern era of Arab-western diplomacy in the quest of Arab national rights. Why are we still corresponding with an array of western powers that seems reluctant to assure us the same rights as the Israelis? This is the basic question that gnaws at the emotions and dignity of every Arab and Muslim. The West's double standards are part of the landscape in which we grew up and matured — as individuals, communities, and countries — but they have become too much to bear without a gesture of our contempt and angry defiance — a self-defeating gesture, perhaps, but an emotionally satisfying one to the majority of Arabs. That gesture is now on the table: the peace talks cannot continue unless the expelled Palestinians are allowed to return home and U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 is fully implemented.

The deeper implication of this gesture is more significant than its short-term repercussions: the Arabs are frustrated, angry, and insulted by the extent of Israeli aggressions and western diplomatic double standards, and they are willing to drop the peace talks altogether until they see an end to this long cycle of Israeli oppression and American-western acquiescence. For many Arabs, this was a convenient excuse to suspend a peace process that they did not have much confidence in from the start.

The Arabs are particularly outraged because the mass expulsion of the Palestinians was quickly followed by a typical display of American-Western diplomatic contortion and political racism.

From Mr. Christopher's statement to the effect that the Israeli offer to return 100 expelled Palestinians should prompt no further Arab diplomatic moves, we understood the following message: the U.N. resolutions against Iraq have to be complied with fully, but the U.N. resolutions against Israel need only 25 per cent compliance to get the White House seal of approval.

The audacity of it all suddenly struck home to most Arabs: we are being played with, and we have been since the early days of this century. The broader implications of how Hamas' Islamist politics fit into the regional picture are secondary in most people's minds, because the primary objective of Arab diplomacy and street sentiment now is to send a message to Israel and the West: enough is enough. Arabs are more concerned to feed their own emotional and political needs than to respond to the complexities of other people's diplomatic games. The prevalent purpose is psychological survival; who cares if Hamas or anyone else rules this region, what matters is only to send the message to the West and Israel. We are human beings who should be treated as human beings. It's a simple message, and an ancient one as well.

We have warned the West for years about double standards and Israel's violations of international law, and for years we have not been taken seriously. The West and Israel assumed we would only complain, but remain in diplomatic line. It seems that the majority of Arabs have reached a threshold, a point of no return where emotional anger turns to political action. The full impact of the Arab posture on the peace process remains unclear; and, from the perspective of the majority of Arabs, it also appears irrelevant. Most Arabs see the peace process as little more than entertainment by hostage performers. Largely geared to American eyes and played according to Israeli rules. This is what I mean by history catching up with diplomacy.

The western obsession with stability as the primary goal of Middle Eastern diplomacy has led to a political order in which Israeli supremacy and Arab subjugation are the rule. The Arabs are now saying that this can no longer remain unchallenged, that our dignity is as important to us as oil or stability or moderation. The risks are high in such a political attitude that is driven mostly by a combination of Israeli audacity, American-western indifference, and Arab weakness and emotionalism.

The fact is, Israel and the West do not much care if we attend the peace talks or not, and the American-Israeli attitude sees the Middle East's problems and pressures as manageable in the short term. There is something to be said for the "feel good" brand of diplomacy that the Arab side is practising now. It is an important occasional shot in the arm, a sort of diplomatic chest-pounding and psychological muscle-flexing that frees the soul of passing demons and haunting ghosts, but perhaps does little more than that. We shall soon find out, with yet another round of talks with yet another important visitor from the West.

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In Somalia, prospects for successful handoff to U.S. unclear

By Reid G. Miller
 The Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia — The U.N. Security Council is expected to approve a major peacekeeping force in the coming weeks for this shattered, famine-stricken land — perhaps its biggest ever.

The U.N. special envoy to Somalia predicts the blue-helmeted force may number up to 20,000 — 3,000 more than in Cambodia, its largest current operation.

But even that number may not allow U.N. peacekeepers to effectively carry on the work of the 38,000-strong U.S.-led military coalition.

The mission could succeed, according to most veteran aid workers, but there are a couple of big ifs:

— If the Security Council breaks tradition and gives them a mandate that permits them to move aggressively against Somali warlords who step out of line, and to shoot first if threatened.

— If they are intelligently led, given a well-defined mission and adequately equipped with helicopters, planes and armoured vehicles.

— If they are not spread out evenly across all of Somalia, a country about the size of Texas, but concentrated in areas of greatest need.

The U.N. peacekeepers will take over from the Americans and 23 allied nations who have sent troops to protect food meant for the starving from falling into the hands of thieves.

The takeover will permit the United States to withdraw about 20,000 of its men and women, leaving an estimated 4,000 behind to help handle logistics and other support tasks for the U.N. force.

But Ismat Kitani, the U.N. special envoy, said the peacekeepers will be responsible for all of Somalia. The U.N. mandate of the American-led coalition confines it to the southern half of the country, where the famine, clan fighting, looting and anarchy are the worst.

"Peacekeeping is not what this country requires, it's peace-making," said Mike McDonagh, the Dublin-born head of Irish Con-

cern in Somalia. "Twenty-thousand would do the job, but it would still need a strong American presence and leadership," Mr. McDonagh said. "And it'll need a tough mandate. I worked in Cambodia for seven months and I saw the 17,000 peacekeepers there," he said. "They've been made idiots of by the communist Khmer Rouge. Kidnapped 10, 12, 14 at a time. They can't even defend themselves."

Mr. McDonagh's thoughts were echoed by Siefaluziz Milas, a Mozambican sociologist who works as a consultant for the U.N. Children's Fund.

"Given the proper terms of reference, I think 20,000 would be enough," Mr. Milas said. "But they'll need the right equipment, particularly helicopter gunships. The principal battle machine of the warlords is the technical," Mr. Milas said, referring to civilian vehicles, usually trucks and pickups, mounted with machine guns and light artillery.

"The helicopter gunship can make a technical a highly undesirable vehicle," Mr. Milas noted.

Rhodi Wynn-Pope, a retired British army major who now runs Care International's Somali operation, also argued for strong, continued American involvement, a well-defined mission for the peacekeepers and the same rules of engagement the U.S. and its allies now employ.

"The question is, do you have a credible deterrence and are you willing to use it?" Mr. Wynn-Pope said. "The Americans proved from day one that they were willing to zap anyone who strayed out of line. If the U.N. force is seen as purely defensive, we're going to lose the momentum we've been given by the Americans," he said. "It needs to be able to take aggressive action in support of a policy of impartiality and contain the militia forces in the country. And it's not going to be able to do that if it's spread the length and breadth of Somalia."

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has said he expects the U.N. mission to last years. But a Wynn-Pope question remains unanswered for the moment: "Is the U.N. force going to keep on providing security?"



LETTERS

Identifying an identity

To the Editor:
 In an admirable and remarkable article entitled "Then, we shall have stability" (Jordan Times, Jan. 26, 1993), Rami Khouri describes the state of affairs of the Arab World in terms of a series of conflicts. He rightly points out that at the core of these conflicts lies the most basic one: The conflict between the individual and the tribe. His exposition of these conflicts is another illustration of his clear writing style, his acute sense of history, and his general open mindedness. If there is a complaint about his writing, however, it is that he seems to assume that the reader is well informed. I am writing this letter to seek a clarification that concerns an important idea in his commentary.

Towards the end of his article, it seems that the mood changes from informing the reader about the situation in the Arab World today to offering a prediction of what will happen in the future. Thus, Mr. Khouri says, these conflicts combined with the practices of the West and its Arab allies "will only aggravate these existing confrontations, and hasten the process by which the natural Arab/Islamic identity of this region will assert itself." Although Mr. Khouri's thesis is interesting and, in my opinion, useful, it is nevertheless incomplete.

His thesis is not as complete as one wants it to be because he failed to define what he means by the expression "natural Arab identity." I got the impression that this expression corresponds to something hidden in our history; and if this thing is revealed, it will guide us to the solutions of all our problems. Of course I might be wrong. But the point I want to make here is this: The expression "natural Arab identity," as it occurs in the article, is ambiguous, for it is possible to interpret it in the following ways:

— Arab identity is a unique, fixed concept that can be discovered if we study Arab/Islamic history carefully, and such a discovery will have considerable bearing on our actions and future; or

— Arab identity is a concept that is always in the making and does not necessarily depend on history; rather, Arabs shape their identity in accordance with their pragmatic needs.

I am not claiming that these two alternatives exhaust all the possibilities that cover a complex notion like "Arab identity." All I am saying is that Mr. Khouri's article does not clarify such a notion, and therefore his thesis appears to be incomplete.

Actually it is worth noting that many people tend to argue that the question "What is an Arab?" is not a real question at all. Many Arabs feel that the answer to such a question is obvious and therefore it is an absolute waste of time to think seriously about it, like the young student at the Baccalaureate school who emphatically said to me: "Look an Arab is an Arab, there is no need for any further explanation." But if such responses are correct, why can't most Arabs effectively discuss their identity?

In any event, I hope that upon reading these remarks, Mr. Khouri will try to clarify what he means by the expression "natural Arab identity."

Ayman Yasin,
 Amman.

Legal and moral obligations

To the Editor:

The Israeli proposal to return 101 expelled Palestinians and to reduce the length of exile of the remaining men only emphasises the urgency of the need to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 799. Nothing in that resolution mentions a partial implementation; instead, it says that all expelled should be returned to their homeland at once. To do less is both inhuman and illegal.

We would like to draw attention to the fact that expelling people from their own country by an occupying power — violates articles 45 and 49 of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Regulations of 1907 and that pursuant to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Commentary to the Fourth Geneva Convention, the expulsion or transfer of "protected persons," i.e. persons living under belligerent occupation, is illegal and constitutes a grave breach of the Convention.

Why do Israeli human rights violations continue after 26 years of occupation, when the United Nations provides mechanisms for the enforcement of its resolutions? International law and the U.N. Charter clearly recognise the vulnerability of civilians in occupied territories and confer jurisdiction as well as the legal obligation upon member states to provide fundamental guarantees to such people. In that context, Palestinians must be granted their rights by law.

We, international women in Jordan, wish to reiterate publicly what we have already stated privately in a previous letter to our respective ambassadors. All states signatory to the Fourth Geneva Convention should honour their legal and moral obligations to uphold U.N. Resolution 799 in its entirety. An attempt to reinterpret or circumvent any resolution discredits the United Nations and all its member states.

Karen Asfour,
 President,
 Bassira-Insight,
 P.O. Box: 6367,
 Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

King urges youth contribution

(Continued from page 1)

democracy-building process, to absorb the new developments and changes in the modern age and interact with these developments with comprehensiveness and awareness.

Stressing that the Kingdom's national role emanates from the principles of the Great Arab Revolt, King Hussein said that these principles form the basis for "our concepts, our aspirations and our future."

Emphasising the need for the youth to abide by the concepts of moderation, King Hussein said: "There is need for avoiding extremism, accepting other people's views, and respecting the values emanating from our faith and our heritage."

"By realising his full rights and duties and the importance of contributing towards the construction of the future, each citizen must be able to exert his efforts towards creating a model state of which everyone will be proud," the King said.

Jordan, the King added, is capable of leading the way for a

better future for future generations, but "the way must be paved with loyalty and truth and, above all, a conviction on the part of all of us to cooperate with others on following the right path."

"I will always remember our meeting here today which I hope will serve as a starting point towards the struggle of the Jordanian youth armed with resolve and determination to attain the aspired goals," he said.

Dr. Khalaf Khazra Khreisha, who spoke on behalf of the delegation, said that the badia youth had prepared a working paper which they were presenting to the King. He said that the paper contained the findings of youth committees which had toured various badia regions taking down their demands and their concepts for development.

The paper, he added, contained ideas for utilising the energy of the badia youth in socio-economic development of their regions.

No talks without evictee return — PLO

(Continued from page 1)

Dr. Shaath said the Palestinian conditions were discussed at talks between Mr. Arafat and President Mubarak and Foreign Minister Amr Musa. Mr. Arafat left Cairo for Tunis Monday after three days of talks.

Dr. Shaath said the United States, co-sponsor of the peace talks which began in 1991, must use its influence with Israel to take back all Palestinian evictees immediately, otherwise it would lose its credibility among Arabs.

"We discussed the conditions that will create better success when we go back to the peace talks. In essence, we consider that the return of the evictees is a necessary but not a sufficient condition," Dr. Shaath told Reuters.

Among the conditions, he said, were a demand for an active U.S. role in confronting Israeli proposals to partition the West Bank and to leave Jerusalem out of the peace process which he said had created an impasse in the talks even before the expulsions.

"Not only are these proposals non-starters but they require a U.S. response for implementing the terms of reference, (U.N.

Resolution) 242," Dr. Shaath said.

Dr. Shaath said the PLO wanted the United States to speed up "public and official" PLO representation both on the negotiation table and in dialogue with the U.S. government after a new Israeli law lifted restrictions on contact with the PLO.

Another PLO requirement was implementation of frequently promised confidence building measures, including guarantees to halt future expulsions, return earlier evictees and stop collective punishments.

But Dr. Shaath added: "The first and foremost condition is the total return of the (expelles) now."

"This act of (expulsion) is flagrant. It has created a situation which puts the peace process in jeopardy. It shakes the credibility of the peace process... of the U.S. commitment and the Palestinian popular support to the process..."

"Everything should be done to bring these (evictees) back as soon as possible. When this happens, we have no problem to return to the peace table," Dr. Shaath said.

Dr. Shaath said the role of the United States as a sponsor of the peace process must not be neutral.

He said peace negotiator Hanan Ashrawi would relay the Palestinian position to U.S. officials in Washington before the

visit of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the Middle East due to start on Feb. 17.

In Tunis, Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes said Monday after meeting Mr. Arafat that a compromise was possible on the Palestinian expellees that would allow the peace talks to resume.

He also said Belgium was ready to act as go-between in the Lockerbie crisis pitting Libya against some Western countries.

Mr. Claes told reporters he had "the conviction there was a will among the Arab leaders to create the necessary conditions to continue the peace process to which there is no alternative."

"I think there are possibilities of an opening," he said.

He said he would discuss the Middle East and Lockerbie with Mr. Christopher in Washington on Feb. 16, hours before Mr. Christopher starts his Middle East tour intended to unlock the Middle East peace process.

"For Belgium, all the resolutions voted by the Security Council should be implemented without exception. But there are difficulties in the case of the implementation of Resolution 799. It wouldn't be wise to refuse a compromise accepted by all the parties," Mr. Claes said.

He declined to discuss details of such a compromise.

Mr. Claes said Libyan Foreign Minister Omar Montasser had given him a message for the U.S. government related to the Lockerbie crisis at a meeting in Brussels last week, and he was ready to act as go-between and deliver it to Mr. Christopher.

"I do not have the sentiment, for the moment, that we are approaching a solution, but my wish with is that a constructive dialogue should restart," he said.

Belgium has represented U.S. interests in Tripoli since Washington broke diplomatic relations with Libya in 1986.

Evictees rule out evacuation of sick

(Continued from page 1)

ter from a hospital in the town of Marjayoun to Israel where they were jailed.

All the remaining evictees face being detained on their return but insist that they will only go back as a group.

The Israeli army said the sick men accepted the Israeli offer when they heard about it. Journalists were barred from visiting the five at Marjayoun before they were returned.

The Palestinians' makeshift camp wedged on a rocky hillside was battered by high winds and driving rain Monday. Streams of water swept into tents, soaking mattresses and bedding.

But the cold expellees received some bread and tinned food smuggled overnight by sympathisers on mules.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Sunday after talks between President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasser

Arafat on the problem that it had to be solved swiftly.

"We must move continuously on the issue. We must deal with the matter quickly to push the peace process (forward) and return to the basis of negotiations, land for peace," he said.

"I expect the Egyptian position to have positive repercussions on the crisis because Egypt has a special weight in the international arena," said Dr. Rantisi, accused by Israel of being a leading member of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas.

He reiterated calls for Palestinians and all Arab negotiators to pull out permanently from the Middle East peace talks, which have been stalled by the new over the expulsions.

He urged the United Nations to meet urgently and said that delaying talks only gave Israel time to sidestep U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 which demands the return of them all.

Human rights centre takes shape

(Continued from page 1)

our age and had human rights freedom in the past few years and succeeded in making major strides towards establishing the foundation of democracy, free expression and political pluralism enhancing the rule of law in the country," he said.

The prime minister said the Jordanian press enjoys freedom of expression at a time when Amman abounds with cultural activities serving as a model for others.

With the creation of political parties, Jordanian citizens are free to become politically active within the framework of the Constitution and the National Charter, Sharif Zeid said. He pledged that the proposed centre for democracy and freedom in Amman could be open to and interacting with the experiments of other nations.

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Kabul

(Continued from page 1)

ridors or were being transferred to other hospitals.

In front of the hospital, one body lay in a car and another was laid out in a pick-up truck.

The bombardment was the heaviest since maverick Mujahideen chief Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the fundamentalist Hezb-e-Islami party, launched his latest attack on President Burhanuddin Rabbani three weeks ago.

Hospitals say 3,000 people have been injured and hundreds killed in the last three weeks, although the exact number of dead was not known since few bodies are brought to hospitals.

Government jet bombers circled overhead on bombing raids against Mr. Hekmatyar's headquarters to the south of Kabul. Tanks patrolled the streets.

Some residents loaded belongings into vans and said they would go to the eastern city of Jalalabad. About one-third of Kabul's 1.5 million people fled in fierce fighting last August.

Asked why he had not left earlier, Microrayon resident Ahmad Shah said: "We are people who don't have the ability to pay for transport out."

Several embassies have been hit in the latest fighting and U.N. officials said the offices of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees were badly damaged by a rocket last week. All U.N. international staff left Kabul last August.

India evacuated all embassy staff last week and the few remaining embassies — Turkey, China, Pakistan, Indonesia, North Korea and the Palestinian mission — are considering closing.

Israelis kill 3 Palestinians

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Shriteh said he was arrested after protesting about the confiscation of his film.

He denied a police accusation that he had incited protesters to throw stones. He also denied ignoring a military order to leave the area.

Both journalists are well known to Gaza commanders and have been arrested before while covering the Palestinian revolt.

Mr. Shriteh was named a winner of the National Press Club's 1993 International Freedom of Press Award as a "journalist who went to extraordinary lengths in 1992 to promote and protect the freedom of the press."

In December, Mr. Shriteh was among Palestinians slated to be expelled. But he was taken off the bus after protests from his employers and reporters' organisations around the world.



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AVAILABILITY OF PLACES IN SOME GRADES IS VERY LIMITED
Administration

PLO, Hamas clash over peace talks

(Continued from page 1)

upon them not to answer to those advocating division and those seeking their own interests and their capitulation views."

Meanwhile Israel is working to develop the economy of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and improve living conditions for Palestinians as part of its struggle against Islamic groups in the area, an official said Monday.

Brigadier General Fredy Zach, an Israeli defence ministry official responsible for economic policy in the occupied territories said in occupied Jerusalem Hamas had won Palestinian support through networks of services it provided to poor people.

"What we believe is that by entering these areas, by improving the infrastructure, by providing better services, by creating more jobs within these areas, this also is one of the means by which the state of Israel can cope with Hamas," Gen. Zach said at a news conference.

He said the Israeli occupation authorities were working to improve communications, electricity and water supplies to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

He also said the authorities had lifted restrictions on the establishment of industries by Palestinians and had given licences to dozens of new factories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including flour mills and a cement factory.

Gen. Zach said some 90 factor-

ies had opened in the Gaza Strip and 83 others in the West Bank over the past year. He said the authorities had also agreed in principle to allow a Jordanian bank to reopen West Bank offices which were closed since 1967.

Israel has kept tight control on development in the occupied territories since 1967, restricting the growth of agriculture and industries which could compete with Israeli products.

Palestinians say Israel's strict licensing policy, the lack of banking and credit institutions and tax policies have hampered development in the occupied territories.

"These Israeli measures, even though they are positive, are so small that they are unlikely to have any impact on our economy," said Samir Abdallah, a Palestinian negotiator and economic expert at the Middle East peace talks.

Mr. Abdallah said unemployment in the occupied territories was about 40 per cent of the work force.

Israel says it views Islamic fundamentalist groups as the main threat to its rule in the occupied territories.

Israeli security sources said the military authorities have also prepared plans to crack down on schools, medical centres and charitable institutions it believed were run by Islamic groups to undermine their influence in the occupied territories.

Air collision kills 132 in Tehran

(Continued from page 1)

Earlier, IRNA cited witnesses as saying one crewman parachuted.

Rescue workers wore masks as fleets of ambulances ferried the dead from the area. Only the Russian pilot had been identified.

Aviation inspectors launched a search for the plane's in-flight "black box" recorders, which could provide clues.

It was not clear if anyone on the ground was killed. Most of the wreckage of Flight 962 fell in a 500-square-metre open area at a

military base, IRNA reported.

That would avoid heavily populated areas that have sprouted up in recent years around Mehrabad airport, which serves both military and civilian aircraft.

A helicopter trying to land at the military field grazed 10 buildings before crashing into a vacant apartment complex nearby Jan. 15, killing the pilot and three passengers.

Rabinovitch sees early talks resumption

(Continued from page 1)

the government," Mr. Rabinovitch added. "And, for me, personally, I think it's a very good basis to start from."

In Tel Aviv, Israel Education Minister Shulamit Aloni said Sunday she expected the peace talks to resume in April, and suggested that by then the controversy over the Palestinian expellees would be resolved.

She told foreign reporters at a news conference that the delay in the talks was a logistical result of the Clinton administration of taking office and Muslim and Jewish holidays in the spring.

Mrs. Aloni, of the left-wing Meretz party, also said other countries were being asked to take some of the approximately

400 evictees stranded in tents in southern Lebanon.

"I believe that behind the scenes there are talks with Syria and other countries which will release the whole thing," meaning undo the evictee logjam, she said. She would not elaborate.

American Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher is due in the region later this month to try to restart the Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Israeli media quoted Mr. Christopher as telling Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on the telephone last week that he expected the talks to resume in April. Israeli officials declined at the time to comment.

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8th Arab Soccer League Champions' Tournament

Jordan's Al Faisali play UAE's Al Shabab today

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's 1992 First Division titleholders Al Faisali Tuesday play the first of their matches at the 8th Arab Soccer League Champions' Tournament held in the Qatari Capital Doha Feb. 8-18.

The tournament opened Monday at Qatar's Al Arabi Club's Hamad International Stadium with seven finalist teams taking part. The first group includes Egyptian Champions Al Ismaili, United Arab Emirates' (UAE) champion Al Shabab and Jordan's Al Faisali. Tournament titleholders Morocco's Al Widad are the first group's fourth team but have declined to play in the final round.

The second group includes Tunisia's Al Tarij club, Qatar's Al Arabi, Saudi Arabia's Al Shabab and Palestine's Al Quds.

The seven participating teams will play an elimination round until Feb. 14. The top two teams of each group will qualify to the second round



Al Faisali

which begins on Feb. 16.

Jordan's Al Faisali will play their first match against the UAE's Al Shabab Tuesday and meet Egypt's Al Ismaili Sunday. The fact that the first group consists of 3 teams enhances Al Faisali's chances of qualifying to the second round.

The Jordanian titleholders had met Qatar's second team Al Rayan in a friendly match

Saturday. The match ended in a scoreless draw. Al Faisali will also play Qatar's Al Wakra club Friday to end their preparations for their match with the Egyptian champions.

Al Faisali is the first Jordanian team to qualify for the finals of this tournament. The club won Jordan's first soccer title back in 1944 and has done so a record 21 times ever since.

In 1992 they became the only team to have won the Soccer Shield, the Jordan Cup and League titles in the same season.

Al Faisali's 28-member delegation includes players: Milad Abbasi, Anis Shafiq, Raed Ahmad, Ziyad Abu Shanab, Mohammad Mahadin, Inhab Naser, Firas Al Khalil, Ahmad Khalil, Adnan Awad, Subhi Suleiman, Subhi Awad, Mousa Awad, Nader Ragheb, Ja'far Hammad, Ali Al Zu'bi, Jiryes Tadros, Khaled Awad, Hasan Al Masri, Ishaq Al Mashini, Saleh Abdul Rahim, Riyad Hassan and Jamal Abu Abed. The team's head coach is Mazhar Al Saeed.

the first Arab Soccer League Champions' Tournament in 1981 was won by Iraq's Al Shurta club. Saudi Arabia's Al Itifaq won in 1984, Iraq's Al Rashid won in 1985, 1986, 1987, Al Itifaq won back the title in 1988 and Morocco's Al Widad is the current titleholder of the seventh tournament held in 1989.



Andre Agassi

Agassi beats Gilbert, wants to be No. 1

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The Volvo Tennis San Francisco Tournament final was a tale of two commuters. One came by plane, the other by car.

That was about the only similarity between Andre Agassi and Brad Gilbert Sunday night. Agassi continued on his path toward regaining a place among the tennis elite, beating Gilbert 6-2, 6-7 (4-7), 6-2 for his second San Francisco title in four years.

Agassi, ranked ninth in the world, is positioning himself for a run at the top. He's never been higher than number three, in 1988.

"It's a big accomplishment to be No. 1," Agassi said. "Respected by those who have been there and haven't been there. There's a new wave of tennis, and I want to be a part of it."

Gilbert, also American, commuted to the tournament from his home in nearby San Rafael and said Agassi has most of the tools to get to the top.

"He (Agassi) probably has as much ability as anybody in the game," Gilbert said. "But in my humble opinion, (Jim) Courier's just won the Australian Open and it's going to be tough for anyone to take him down."

No. 1, they're going to have to take it away from somebody who wants it an awful lot."

Agassi showed plenty of that determination Sunday night. Agassi, playing exceptional

tennis, was about to complete a straight sets victory when impatience got the best of him. He double-faulted on double match point, and Gilbert eventually forced a tiebreaker, which he won 7-4.

The top-seeded Agassi beat the second seeded Gilbert for the first time since 1989. Gilbert was 4-2 life-time against Agassi, including three straight before Sunday.

Agassi, winning his 19th career singles title, also won the San Francisco championship in 1990. Gilbert has not won a tournament since September 1990 in Brisbane, Australia.

Seles, Navratilova to head field

Top seeded Monica Seles and defending champion Martina Navratilova are among the field of 20 competing in this year's Virginia Slims of Chicago tournament.

Seles, Navratilova, third seeded Mary Joe Fernandez and fourth-seeded Katerina Maleeva drew first round byes.

Three of the top seeds, including fifth seeded Zina Garrison Jackson, will see first round action.

Navratilova is seeking her 13th Chicago crown, while Seles' first and only Chicago appearance resulted in a first round loss to Roz Fairbank-Nideffer.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY FEBRUARY 9, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Remaining non-committal at breakfast may prove the best course of action now, no matter how practical the planning may appear. Tonight is great for social circuit.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get into whatever matters of a personal nature you have been preoccupied with and in the evening join with a group of talented acquaintances to learn.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Although a Tuesday get out in public and show you are a solid citizen by performing some public activity, later you can impress one in power.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can now carry through with an agreement made with a newcomer to your mutual advantage after which look for new inspiration to guide your future.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Your prophetic insight is unusually accurate now and shows you how best to map out your future; then accept a favour from a business person.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be with clever associates doing the terminal activities required in a joint venture after which you can join progressive personal at unique interests.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A day to think out ways that you can perform your routines in a

more exciting and skillful manner so get busy and find ways to do so. LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Do those things which you have enjoyed for sometime past and complete arrangements to enjoy them in the future as well, including chosen companions in plans.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Lots of things to be done at your residence can now be handled in a pleasant and interesting fashion so conditions there are more as you wish.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get out this day and see everyone possible who can aid you in whatever you have to do that requires some cooperative assistance.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Make sure you do something today to add to the charm and value of whatever possessions or property you have for much can be done that is worthwhile.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is the day for you to be highly personal in letting those in whom you have confidence know of your desires and accept their assistance.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Whatever your intimate urges you have the chance now to attain them in unusual or unique ways so put on your thinking cap to gain them.

No time for Marseille to celebrate

PARIS (R) — French champions Marseille hit six goals in a league match for the first time in two years but had no time to celebrate as they eyed the chances of topping the table for the first time this season.

The only team from the top six to win at the weekend, Marseille closed the gap on leaders Monaco to just one point after the 6-1 thrashing of Nimes and could go top if they win in Le Havre Wednesday.

Monaco, who dropped a point in a goalless draw in Montpellier, have a tough home game against fifth-placed Bordeaux in Wednesday's league programme — brought forward because France have a world cup qualifier in Israel next week.

With two goals each from German Rudi Voller and midfielder Franck Sauze and a first strike for Ukrainian signing Igor Dobrovolski, Marseille showed signs they are hitting the sort of form which could take them to a record fifth consecutive title.

But Belgian coach Raymond Goethals was characteristically dissatisfied, dwelling on the goal his team conceded rather than the six scored.

Wenger was unruffled by Monaco's second hard-fought draw in a row. "Two points from visits to Lens and Montpellier suit us fine," he said. "A lot of other teams will lose there."

Less happy were the trainers of Paris St. Germain and Nantes, who both dropped points to fall a point behind Marseille.

The Paris club's Portuguese coach Artur Jorge was furious with his team's first half display in the 1-1 draw at Valenciennes.

"At halftime I told the players if they continued like that they would lose," he said. "We have to understand it's important to start playing from the opening whistle. We must go out aggressively, in the positive sense. We didn't and Valenciennes took advantage."

Nantes travel to Lens Wednesday while Paris St. Germain entertain Montpellier.

Juventus suffer at Atalanta

Italian soccer giants Juventus lost another bout in their battle to keep up with runaway leaders AC

Milan, going down 2-1 at Atalanta to sink an embarrassing 13 points behind the champions.

The Turin side, accustomed to life in the top flight, now lie in fifth place in the league.

They had not been beaten at Atalanta in Bergamo since 1963, but coach Giovanni Trapattoni was gracious in defeat.

"This was a fair result. Atalanta were more incisive, while we conceded too much space and were duly punished," he said.

Trapattoni appears happy with his attacking formation, however, and said he intended to continue playing the "five star" attack of pier Luigi Casiraghi, Gianluca Violi, Roberto Baggio, Englishman David Platt and German Andreas Moeller.

Moeller equalised for Juventus after Atalanta had gone ahead in the 36th minute through Carlo Perrone, but Maurizio Ganz scored again in the 72nd improving Atalanta's fine home record this season to 18 points from 10 games.

They are joint third with Lazio, to points behind Internazionale, who drew 0-0 at Cagliari.

While Juventus struggled in Bergamo, things were easy for all-conquering Milan, who took their two season-long unbeaten league run to 54 matches, defeating bottom club Pescara 4-0 at the San Siro.

Speaking after a game in which Frenchman Jean-Pierre Papin scored a double, with the other goals coming from Roberto Donadoni and Montenegrin Dejan Savicevic, AC Milan president Silvio Berlusconi said:

"I'm pleased with the result, the goals and the chances created."

"However, the best thing of all is something else, it is the way they were still striving hard when they were 4-0 up, trying to score another goal. That's the right Milan mentality."

Coach Fabio Capello probably sent shivers down his opponents' spines after the game. When he told a radio reporter: "We played well today and this game shows that we are improving."

Milan go to Atalanta next Sunday.

Lazio produced the other strong performance of the day.

Manchester drops bid to sponsor World Chess match

MANCHESTER (R) — The city of Manchester Sunday dropped out of the bidding to hold the World Chess Championship in which Britain's Nigel Short will challenge titleholder Garry Kasparov.

A spokesman for the Northern English city said it had been unable to raise the necessary sponsorship money. Zagreb, Berlin, Jakarta and Santiago, Spain, also want to stage the contest.

The International Chess Federation is due to open sealed bids in Lucerne, Switzerland, for sponsors for the title match starting in September.

The British are especially keen to hold the match in Britain because Short, 27, is the first Englishman to get so close to the world title in more than a century. He beat Dutchman Jan Timman in playoffs in Spain last month.

Short, who left school at 17 to concentrate on chess, is the first player from outside the former Soviet Union to contest the finals since American Bobby Fischer beat Boris Spassky in 1972.

Short, arriving back in Britain from Spain Sunday, said he would soon start physical training for the eight-week match but made clear that personalities would dominate the contest.

Of Kasparov, he said: "He is incredibly arrogant, he's power hungry, he's a very nasty guy." He added: "There will be a lot of pleasure in beating him."

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF

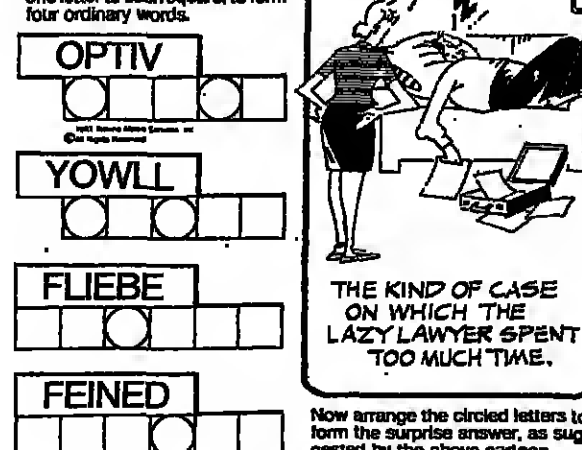
By Harris



"The next time you're mad at Stanley hug him your complaint in Morse Code."

JUMBLE

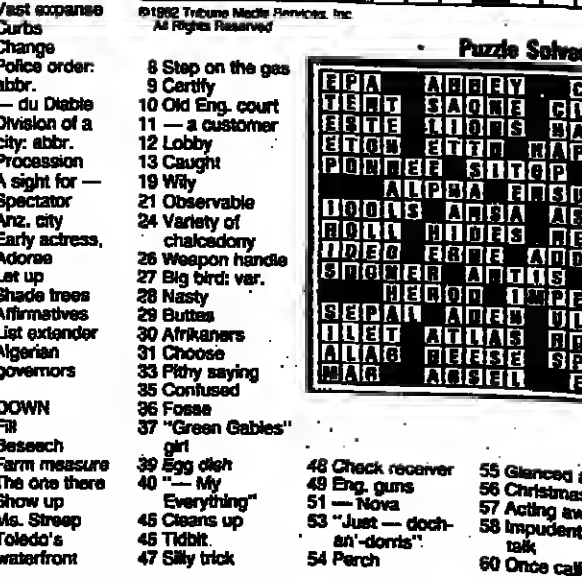
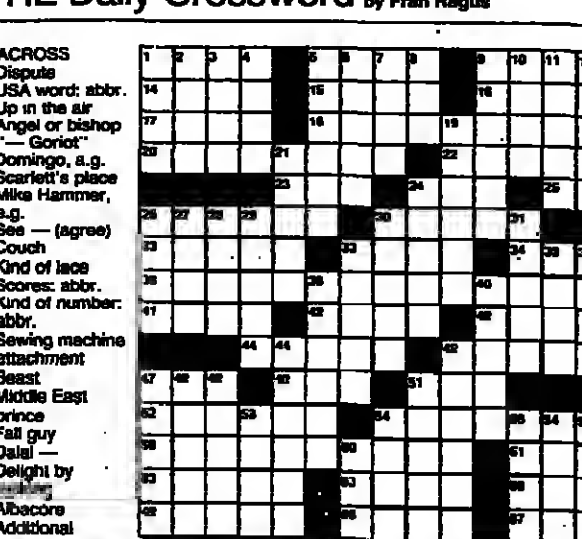
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumbles: DOWNY STROKE GIMLET MAGNET
Answer: How the pawnbroker felt all by himself — "LOANSOME"

THE Daily Crossword by Fran Ragus



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠107632 ♠9854 ♣K62 ♦5
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1. Pass 1. Pass
What action do you take?

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠10952 ♠Q1073 ♠865 ♦6
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1. Pass 1. Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K1087 ♠54 ♠J ♠Q9654
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1. Dbl 1. Pass
What action do you take?

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠A106 ♠10953 ♠K8 ♠KJ109
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
Pass Pass 1. Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠J9 ♠K42 ♠AJ98 ♠J876
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
Pass Pass 1. Pass
What action do you take?

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AJ9 ♠Q98 ♠AJ73 ♠KQ5
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 3. Pass
What do you bid now?

S. Korea steps up war on fakes

SEOUL (R) — South Korea will launch a major new drive to protect patent rights and copyrights to ease trade friction with the United States and other countries, a state prosecution spokesman has said. He said the prosecution's anti-counterfeiting team had been doubled in size to 500 members, ready for a nationwide crackdown on counterfeiters.

Foreign manufacturers of designer goods have accused South Korea of being one of the world's chief producers of fake brandname products.

The team has targeted those who counterfeit trademark items such as bags and clothes, computer software pirates and bootleggers in video, audio and publications.

"The special clampdown will continue until the end of April and we are going to apply strict criminal sanctions against violators," the spokesman said.

"Trade friction with the United States and other foreign countries will escalate unless we enforce anti-counterfeiting laws strictly," he pointed out.

South Korea, where many brandname goods such as Reebok and Nike sports shoes are produced legitimately under licence, has thriving counterfeiting industry. Seoul's Itaewon district, next to the main American military base, is notorious for its \$20 fake Rolex watches, counterfeit designer shirts and fake brandname sportswear.

Arab Financial Services expands into Mastercard

MANAMA (R) — Arab Financial Services Co. E.C. (AFS), a close ally of Visa in the Middle East, announced Monday it had branched out to deal with Mastercard as well.

The Bahrain-based firm, owned by close to 60 Arab banks and financial institutions, said in a statement it had completed development of an on-line computer link with the Mastercard Corporation in the United States.

It said it had become the first financial institution in the region to provide bureau processing services — whereby it processes credit card payments and billings on behalf of other banks which issued these cards — for Mastercards.

AFS does it now for Visa cards. It also issues Visa travellers cheques — more than any other company in the world except Barclays PLC.

Japan's auto output drops 5.6 per cent

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's motor vehicle production fell by 5.6 per cent in 1992 to 12,499,284 vehicles, including mini-cars, because of a decline in domestic sales, the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association has said.

It was the second consecutive year that the output had declined from the previous year.

Tadashi Kotake of the association attributed the decline to a 7.2 per cent decrease in domestic sales amid Japan's economic slump.

Mr. Kotake said the association estimated that exports to 1992 also declined by 1.3 per cent from 1991 to 5.68 million vehicles.

The 1992 production totalled 9,378,694 passenger cars, including 780,934 mini-cars, down 3.8 per cent; 3,068,585 trucks, including 857,087 mini-trucks, down 11.0 per cent; and 52,005 buses, up 17.0 per cent from 1991, Mr. Kotake said.

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INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	35,752	2.740	2.740
THE JORDAN BANK	45,864	4.160	4.160
JORDAN KUNAFAT BANK	26,768	2.500	2.490
ABU BAKE INVESTMENT BANK	15,290	1.430	1.440
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	109,274	4.750	4.740
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	89,713	5.800	5.770
THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL BANK	8,555	5.500	5.550
ABU BAKE SAVINGS & INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	190,201	1.840	1.840
ABU BAKE BANKING CORPORATION	17,450	2.450	2.450
ABU BAKE INSURANCE	30,675	4.760	4.740
ABU BAKE LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	1,475	2.950	2.950
ABU BAKE MARINE INSURANCE	7,765	4.100	4.100
JORDAN FIRE INSURANCE	97,213	3.940	3.930
ABU BAKE LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	1,475	2.950	2.950
ABU BAKE MARINE INSURANCE	7,765	4.100	4.100
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Relief flights resume to Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (R) — International relief flights to the embattled Bosnian capital of Sarajevo, halted for two days after rebel Serbs hit a German plane with anti-aircraft fire, resumed Monday.

Reporters in Sarajevo said four flights landed Monday morning and a total of 14 were due during the day.

The flights, ferrying supplies of food and medicine to some 380,000 trapped residents, are coming from the Croatian port of Split and from U.S. Air Bases in Germany, officials said.

Flights from Zagreb, the Croatian capital, have been halted since Saturday when the German C-160 Transall transport plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire shortly after take-off. A crewman was badly injured.

Foreign commercial airlines also shunned Zagreb Monday for a second day. The U.N. relief flights and the commercial airlines are waiting until they are confident the air corridors to and from the Croatian capital are safe.

Meanwhile, Serb forces fired four mortar bombs into besieged Sarajevo Monday, Bosnian radio said, as international mediators prepared to brief the U.N. Security Council on their efforts to secure peace.

The early morning attack on the Bosnian capital's Novo Sarajevo district brought a lull in fighting since Sunday evening, local journalists said.

The radio warned Sarajevo's 380,000 trapped residents against venturing into the streets, urging

them not to be lulled into a "false sense of security" after a quiet night.

It reminded listeners that three people were killed and six wounded Sunday despite a halt in major military activity.

A mortar bomb slammed into a group of people waiting for water, killing two women and a child.

Monday's Security Council meeting will be the body's first review of peace proposals drafted by mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen to end Europe's worst conflict since World War II.

A fresh wave of ethnic fighting swept across Bosnia and along Croatia's Adriatic coast during the weekend while U.N. talks failed to push Bosnia's warring Muslims, Croats and Serbs any closer to a settlement.

Mr. Vance and Lord Owen were to brief the Security Council on their so far futile efforts to get all three communities to accept a map carving the republic into 10 semi-autonomous provinces largely along ethnic lines.

The proposed map appeared to fuel the latest fighting. U.N. officials said Serbs were driving Muslims from their homes in eastern Bosnia to "cleanse" areas which they would control.

No quick move was expected by the Security Council and there appeared to be little chance of an agreement before the new Clinton administration produced its own plan.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said in an interview Monday that he hoped the



A Serbian fighter fires his machinegun towards a Croatian position in Gorazd, 80 kilometres from Kulu, the capital of the Serb-held enclave of Krajina (AFP photo)

United States would back sanctions rather than force to end fighting.

Mr. Hurd told the German daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung that the United Nations imposed stiff economic sanctions on the rump Yugoslavia of Serbia and Montenegro last May for its backing of Serbs in Bosnia, bringing its ailing economy close to collapse and forcing it to ration fuel and electricity.

The Bosnian bloodshed spilled over at the weekend in some of

the worst violence in several weeks in neighbouring Croatia, where government troops attacked the Serb-held enclave of Krajina above the Adriatic coast on Jan. 22.

The Krajina front was quiet overnight after both sides reported weekend artillery, tank and infantry assaults on villages in a belt from the Croatian ports of Zadar to Sibenik.

Ivica Ceko, Croatian army spokesman for the Zadar region, said Croatian forces in the area had repelled a major Serb counterattack Sunday.

He denied Serb reports that Serb forces had recaptured the key villages of Prizdraga and Podgradina and destroyed three Croatian tanks.

The Croatian thrust into Krajina broke a year-old truce that had been brokered and overseen by the United Nations.

The Serb rebels in Krajina, who have declared their own state, rejected a request from Lord Owen and Mr. Vance for quick talks to stop the fighting, saying they would meet only after the Croats withdraw from areas they captured in their offensive.

N. Korea accuses U.S. of using inspections to spy

SEOUL (AP) — North Korea issued a strongly worded statement Monday charging that the United States is attempting to use international nuclear inspections to spy on military bases.

The statement by North Korea's Foreign Ministry accused Washington of infringing on the North's sovereignty by using spy satellites and turning the information over to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"The IAEA has no right to use information offered by a third country" in its nuclear inspections, said the statement, carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

It accused the United States of trying to gain access to North Korean military facilities through the IAEA inspections.

"We can neither accept nor tolerate any matter infringing upon the sovereignty and security of our country," it said.

The harsh comments, monitored in Tokyo, appeared to reflect a growing isolation in one of the world's last hardline Communist nations and frustration at its failure to attract foreign investment to bolster its sagging economy.

Western nations, including Japan and the United States, have refused to provide economic assistance until concerns over alleged North Korean nuclear

weapons development are resolved. The West has backed South Korea's demand for mutual nuclear inspections by the two Koreas.

The statement is the first since North Korea denied access to IAEA inspectors at two installations a week ago. They said the installations were not on the original inspection list.

Also Monday, South Korean President Roh Tae Woo urged the North to renounce development of nuclear weapons to pave the way for eventual unification.

Mr. Roh said concerns over North Korea's alleged nuclear weapon development were the main obstacle for improved inter-Korean relations and pose a threat to international security.

"This is my message to (North Korean leader) Kim Il Sung," Mr. Roh said. "Please renounce development of nuclear weapons to foster mutual trust and prosperity, and to work toward achieving the national unification we both desire."

Western intelligence reports have for several years indicated that North Korea may have a clandestine nuclear weapons development programme. North Korea claims its nuclear programme is peaceful, and last year allowed international inspections, which have not been completed.

Column 800000

Diana tops in royal popularity

LONDON (AP) — An opinion poll taken after the most recent royal sensations indicates Princess Diana is still the most popular royal, but her estranged husband Prince Charles has plummeted in the public's eye. The Gallup poll, published Monday in the Daily Telegraph, also says 65 per cent of those asked favoured a more approachable, "democratic" monarchy, like that of the Netherlands. Twenty-four per cent said the British royals should stay as they are, and 9 per cent said the monarchy should be replaced by a non-executive president.

In the past three months the Prince and Princess of Wales have been separated, both have been accused of leaking stories to the press, and newspapers have printed transcripts of a racy telephone conversation purportedly between Prince Charles and a married woman. The interviews with 999 people between Jan. 28 and Feb. 2 found Prince Charles' popularity had fallen drastically in the past 10 months. In a similar poll conducted in June 1991, 15 per cent said Prince Charles was their favourite member of the royal family. In this latest poll his popularity rating had sunk to 4 per cent. The Princess of Wales had 22 per cent of the vote, the highest rating, in both polls.

Asked if the nation still could be proud of the monarchy, 64 per cent said yes and 34 per cent, no. Eighty seven per cent thought Queen Elizabeth II did a good job, but that some of her family let her down.

Angola troops, rebels battle for key city

CATUMBELA, Angola (AP) — Hundreds of government troops have battled rebels for access to the strategic highland city of Huambo, with both sides hoping to have the upper hand before peace talks resume.

Meanwhile, 21 foreign oil company workers who were held captive for three weeks by the rebels in the north were released and flown to Libreville, Gabon, Sunday, news reports said.

The airport they departed from — in Uige, about 250 kilometres northeast of the capital Luanda — came under attack as the plane left, reports said. One evacuee, a Briton, was hit in the leg by shrapnel. No details were immediately available.

Most of the workers were employed by a Belgian oil company, Petrofina. Fourteen of the former captives were Portuguese and the rest were British, Italian, Argentine and Indonesian.

Artillery duels continued Sunday in Huambo, about 240 kilometres east of the government's regional command centre

in Catumbela.

Huambo was a longtime stronghold of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), rebels until government forces attacked the city in early January. Back-and-forth battles that followed have reportedly left the city in ruins and people facing starvation.

A government battalion also clashed with rebel troops at Catumbela, about 48 kilometres east of Catumbela.

Catumbela is the first of several towns the government must take if it is to open a supply route to Huambo from the coast. Gen. Armando Da Cruz Neto told the Associated Press in the Catumbela Command Centre.

"Huambo means a passage to the sea to survive," Gen. Armando said. He said people in Huambo were dying of starvation. It was not possible to immediately verify the report.

A second round of peace talks is due to begin Wednesday in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

But Angolan national radio re-

ported Sunday that delegates from UNITA (the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) have been unable to report to their superiors and might not attend the talks. The first round ended a week ago.

Angola's civil war broke out on the eve of independence from Portugal in 1975. About 350,000 people died in the fighting before peace accords signed in May 1991 paved the way for military demobilisation and national elections.

In the first round of presidential voting, President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos defeated rebel leader Jonas Savimbi. The president's once-Marxist Party also won in the parliamentary elections.

Mr. Savimbi declared the elections rigged, pulled his troops out of the new national army and fell back to Huambo.

Fighting began less than a month later, spreading quickly throughout the country and has killed an estimated 10,000 people.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Tudjman's party heads for victory

ZAGREB (R) — Croatian President Franjo Tudjman's right-wing party was heading for victory in regional elections as preliminary results Monday morning showed it well ahead of opposition in most of the country. Croatian Radio said Mr. Tudjman's Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ) party was leading in most of the 16 counties for which results were available, after half the vote had been counted. There are altogether 21 counties. The radio said the HDZ was behind only in Varazdin and Medimurje counties, to the north of Zagreb, and in Istria county on the northernmost part of the Adriatic coast. Voting took place Sunday and the result is expected to consolidate the political grip of Mr. Tudjman, whose army is waging a popular offensive against Serb rebels. Twenty-seven parties fielded candidates for a new upper house of districts, largely a rubber-stamp body, and 8,037 county and town councils across the former Yugoslav republic.

U.N. observer stabbed in S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (R) — A United Nations' observer, in South Africa to monitor violence, was dragged from his car and stabbed in Johannesburg's Alexandra township, police said Monday. Captain Eugene Opperman said Jim Anderson was stabbed in the arm after being pulled from his car by a group of men who stole the vehicle at the weekend. No arrests have been made but the car has been recovered.

Fergie, father in new scandal claims

LONDON (R) — Britain's Duchess of York, the estranged wife of Prince Andrew, was involved in a new sex scandal, Monday following claims in a kiss-and-tell biography by her father's alleged former mistress, Lesley Player said in her book My Story: The Duchess of York, Her Father and Me that she slept with the duchess's father Major Ron Ferguson at Sunninghill, the Yorks' marital home. The 34-year-old polo-playing businessman also said in the book, which was serialised in a Sunday newspaper, that both she and the duchess had affairs with Texas businessman Steve Wyatt. Reports of a close friendship between Wyatt and the former Sarah Ferguson, also known as Fergie, fuelled rumours of a rift in her marriage to Queen Elizabeth's second son last April. Photos of Fergie on holiday with Mr. Wyatt rocked the marriage and the couple separated six years after their royal wedding. Fergie was said to be devastated by the latest reports. "This could not have come at a worse time for Sarah," a member of Fergie's circle told the Daily Express newspaper. The duchess was attempting to restore her reputation and was just returning to public life after a scandal about her friendship with her financial adviser Johnny Bryan.

Ex-queen of Yugoslavia buried in Greece

ATHENS (R) — Former Queen Alexandra of Yugoslavia, the widow of Peter II, was buried Sunday at the Greek royal cemetery outside Athens, her birthplace. Her son, Crown Prince Alexander, and a few dozen royalists attended the funeral service in central Athens and the burial at Tatou, the grounds of the deserted Greek summer palace north of the capital. Queen Alexandra, who died eight days ago in England, aged 71, was born Princess Alexandra of Greece and Denmark five months after her father, King Alexander of the Hellenes, died of blood poisoning after being bitten by a pet monkey. Queen Alexandra married the dethroned King Peter II of Yugoslavia in London in 1944. They were great-grandchildren of Britain's Queen Victoria and their son was born in England.

Intruder held at U.S. nuclear plant

MIDDLETOWN, Pa. (AP) — A man crashed a car through the gates at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant, spending four hours inside the plant before being arrested, police said. Pierce Nye, 31, of Bethel, was arrested inside the turbine building, which houses electrical generating equipment, state police and plant officials said. State police spokesman Charles Tocci said Mr. Nye told authorities he acted alone, had no explosives and didn't tamper with anything. Details of his activities while he was inside the plant weren't immediately released. Authorities did not say why he drove into the plant. Kay Carman, deputy director of York County Emergency Management Agency, said Mr. Nye was released on Jan. 17 from the psychiatric ward of Ephrata Community Hospital. The hospital wouldn't confirm that he had been a patient there.

Christopher to meet NATO ministers

BRUSSELS (R) — New U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will meet NATO foreign ministers in Brussels on Feb. 26 to discuss trans-Atlantic ties and former Yugoslavia, alliance sources said Monday. "The meeting will be a chance for Christopher to get to know the players at NATO and it sends an important, early signal about continued U.S. commitment to the alliance," said one source, who asked not to be identified. Mr. Christopher, on his first foreign trip since the Clinton administration took over last month, is travelling first to the Middle East and then to Geneva where he will meet Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev. After the NATO meeting, he will also meet European Community officials, the sources said.

Rao rejects regional talks on nuclear arms

NEW DELHI (AP) — Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao Sunday rejected the idea of talking to Pakistan about nuclear disarmament, saying suspicion between the two countries runs too deep.

"I have the feeling that this subject, when discussed between India and Pakistan, will lead nowhere," Mr. Rao told a telephone caller from Islamabad, Pakistan's capital. "Our suspicions about each other persist."

Mr. Rao was speaking from his New Delhi home on an hour-long phone-in programme by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Aired on both radio and television. He is the first of the South Asian leaders who will be interviewed over the next few weeks on the BBC by telephone callers.

Indirectly dismissing the U.S. favoured approach of regional solutions to nuclear tensions, Mr. Rao said dismantling nuclear arsenals was a worldwide issue.

"These problems cannot be solved on a regional basis. They are global in nature and the solution also has to be global in nature," he said.

Both India and Pakistan admit they have nuclear capability, but each denies it has acquired weapons. Western disarmament

experts suspect that both have bombs that could be quickly assembled.

Pakistan wants a five-nation conference, including the U.S., Russia and China, to talk about ending the nuclear threat in South Asia.

Hours before the programme, India announced that it had conducted its 10th test firing of a prototype missile, the Prithvi, which would be capable of delivering nuclear explosives to Pakistan. The missile has a maximum range of 155 miles (250 kilometres).

Mr. Rao fielded questions ranging from education for Muslim women and birth control to a host of doubts about India's economic reform programme. Most of the calls were from India. But some telephoned from cities around the world, including several calls from the United States.

Mr. Rao conceded India's economic reforms have been ignored for two months while the government dealt with a resurgence of Hindu nationalism and a flare-up of Hindu-Muslim riots that cost 1,000 lives.

"We have gone back to the economic agenda and ... we are making up for the lost time," Mr. Rao said.

Diminutive car thief causes one-boy crime wave

SUNDERLAND, England (R) — A 13-year-old car thief, so short that he needs a cushion to see over the steering wheel, is wanted in connection with 200 auto crimes in six months, police said. The boy, who is under five feet (1.6 metres) tall, was arrested in this northeastern English town and charged with theft last week but escaped the next day. Although he needs to use the headrest from car seats as a cushion to see over the steering wheel, his trail of destruction — including a rammed police patrol car — has made him a hero among teenage criminals in the area. Police said in the 24 hours since he was arrested, crime in central Sunderland fell by 50 per cent.

Minister writes aid IOU on table napkin

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand Foreign Minister Don McKinnon made an emergency aid payment of New Zealand dollars 50,000 (\$25,000) to cyclone-hit Western Samoa by scribbling an IOU on a table napkin, his office said Monday. Mr. McKinnon made the unusual payment during a weekend visit to the South Pacific nation to examine damage caused last week by cyclone Lyn. He was lunching with Samoan Prime Minister Tofia Efi Alesana at the time. Mr. McKinnon's office said he was awarded the honourific title of Tali Tigoa Samoa (the one who answers to all Samoan problems) during his visit.

Mercy mission for Japan fowl which forgot to duck

TOKYO (R) — Viewers across Japan are tuning in nightly for news of a mercy mission by Tokyo city officials to capture and treat a duck with an arrow stuck through its body. With the sort of excitement usually reserved for soap opera stars, people jostled each other in a Tokyo park at the weekend to photograph the bird which has made headlines for days. "It was a warm Sunday, and many people who knew about the bird came to the pond," a city official said. Apparently scared and deeply suspicious of the crowd, it continued to elude efforts to capture it by tiring it with food. The pin-tailed duck was first noticed more than a week ago, at a pond in one of the capital's parks. The arrow is deeply imbedded in its back, apparently the result of a mean prank. Some veterinarians say the arrow could have pierced the bird's kidney, but it does not seem to be in distress and can waddle or fly with apparent ease. To get away from its would-be captors, the bird has been communicating between several different ponds. "We want to do something about it," the official said, "but we haven't got much time before the birds start their migration."

Greece expels hundreds of Albanians

KRISTALLOPIGI, Greece (AP) — Greece sent hundreds of Albanians back across the border as part of an effort to expel an estimated 500,000 illegal aliens blamed for a country wide increase in crime.

Police at this desolate post on the mountainous border between Greece and Albania about 400 Albanians Sunday. They said most were expected to sneak back.

The expulsions began mid-morning when two police buses pulled up with 102 young Albanians arrested without residence permits at the northern towns of Florina and Kozani.

Once across, they joined hundreds of others milling about trying to talk their way back.

"I like Greece," said Ilija Hoja as he crossed into Albania, carrying a bag with his belongings. "I'll come back again."

A Greek police officer nodded grimly. "I know you will," he said.

"I've seen some of them so many times they even say hello. It's almost unbelievable," he said. The officer spoke on condition of anonymity, in accordance with regulations.

The government last week announced a nationwide sweep to detain and expel an estimated 500,000 foreigners — mostly economic migrants — who have entered illegally over the past three years.

Public Order Minister Nikos Geletharis blamed the immig-

rants for rising crime. They include economic refugees from the former East Bloc, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. But it is the Albanians, who number about 150,000, who have been blamed the most for the rise in crime.

Although no massive dragnet for all illegal aliens has materialised yet, police have intensified the deportations of Albanians. Greece began deporting Albanians in 1990 when tens of thousands of them entered Greece at the time of the collapse of Albania's Communist government.

About 90,000 Albanians were deported in 1990 and 85,000 in 1991. No figures have been announced for 1992.

Sihanouk wants presidency with power

PEKING (R) — Cambodia's Prince Norodom Sihanouk said Monday that he will only run for president if the post has the same power as in the United States.

"Due to the actual grave situation in my country, it is important that the president should have the same power as the president of the U.S.," Prince Sihanouk said in a statement issued from his residence in the Chinese capital.

Analysts said that Prince Sihanouk, who said he would return to Cambodia Tuesday, was making clear he was unwilling to share power with a prime minister.

"Of course alongside the president there will be a parliament (congress) or a national assembly," he said.

"My candidacy or my non-candidacy in the presidential election will depend on what I will think about the contents of the constitution which will be given to Cambodia by the Constituent Assembly."

Cambodia will hold elections for the Constituent Assembly on May 23-25.

Prince Sihanouk earlier wanted to see a president elected before an assembly was chosen but has since reversed his position, saying an elected legislature must come up with a constitution before presidential elections can be held.

The assembly will draft a new constitution for Cambodia in a transition to becoming a full par-

liament.

The radical Khmer Rouge guerrilla faction has refused to respect the terms of the U.N.-sponsored peace treaty, or to contest the polls.

Prince Sihanouk would handily win a presidential poll if he runs, analysts said.

His candidacy is seen as crucial to bringing stability to the South East Asian nation, which has been racked by civil war and other violence for more than two decades.

Meanwhile, isolated skirmishes between the Phnom Penh army and Khmer Rouge guerrillas were reported by U.N. peacekeepers Monday after what the United Nations said was a coordinated offensive by government forces.

"The large number of ceasefire violations committed by CPAF (Cambodian People's Armed Forces, the Phnom Penh government's army) forces and reported at the beginning of last week are now a lost less numerous," a spokesman for the peacekeepers said.

Government forces appeared to have halted advances in several provinces although they were still responsible for minor violations, he said.

The Phnom Penh army was still carrying out limited operations in the northwestern part of Siem Reap province, the spokesman said.

Several districts in Battambang

province, which bore the brunt of recent fighting, continued to remain tense, he said.

Last week the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) accused the government army of mounting a coordinated attack against the Khmer Rouge. UNTAC said the offensive went beyond the self-defence rule in the peace accords signed in October, 1991.

The fighting was described as the "most serious" ceasefire violation since the arrival of the 22,000-strong contingent of U.N. peacekeepers last March.

Phnom Penh Prime Minister Hun Sen last week insisted that all government military action had been within the zones it was recognised to control at the signing of the peace accords. He said the Khmer Rouge has taken advantage of the peace agreement to infiltrate these areas and built up positions with heavy weapons and ammunition.

Isolated skirmishing between Khmer Rouge guerrillas and government soldiers was reported to be continuing in long-troubled Kompong Thom province in the central part of Cambodia.

The Khmer Rouge has refused to cooperate with UNTAC and implement the terms of the U.N.-sponsored peace agreement and two other guerrilla groups signed with the government.

It refuses to disarm or to take part in nationwide elections.